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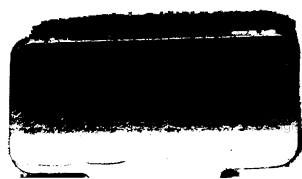
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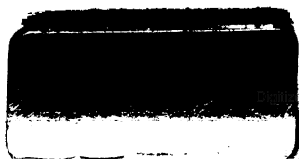
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THE
HISTORY
OF THE
HELVETIC CONFEDERACY.

BY JOSEPH PLANTA, ESQ. F.R.S.

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Prisca fides facto, sed fama perennis.

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THE HISTORY
OF THE
HELVETIC CONFEDERACY.

BOOK II.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CONFEDERACY.

CHAP. VII.

Sequel of the Reformation.

IT would probably have been deemed a rash CHAP.
VII.
presage had any one, at the period we have now reached, foretold that, notwithstanding the bloody wars and bitter animosities which had prevailed during the progress of the Reformation, and which ultimately subsided into a schism that has to our days been kept up with no small degree of obstinacy and rancour, the Confederacy should nevertheless have preserved all its vigour, and should even have maintained a permanent harmony among the jarring elements of which it became from this time composed. Yet, though the religious zeal which now fired the passions of men of different per-
VOL. III. B suasions,

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VII.

suasions, incessantly urged them to discord and violence, and indeed established interests which seemed incompatible with public tranquillity, such were the means supplied by the union for composing those dissensions, that for upwards of two succeeding centuries, except a few partial contests mostly occasioned by pious emulation, the historian has little to commemorate concerning the public transactions of this people ; unless he were to enter into a detail of the various alliances of their different states with foreign powers, and the many eminent services rendered by their troops to the sovereigns in whose armies they occasionally engaged.

As it is not intended to swell these volumes by a circumstantial account of those services, and those alliances, of the principal part of which copious histories are already in the hands of the public,¹ the sequel of this narrative will admit of a brevity, which it is hoped will not disappoint the English reader, who can no longer be equally interested in the petty wars of distant tribes, in which, although much energy has been at times displayed, yet the

¹ Baron de Zurlauben, *Hist. Milit. des Suisses au Service de la France*. Twelve vols. 12mo. F. Girard *Histoire abrégée des Officiers Suisses qui se sont distingués aux Services étrangers*. Three vols. 8vo. M. May de Romainmoutier, *Hist. Militaire de la Suisse*. Eight vols. 8vo.

motives

motives were seldom so pure as those which have stamped the character of heroism upon their earlier struggles for independence.

Four of the cantons, and among these the two principal of them, had adopted the Reformation;² seven remained firmly addicted to the faith of their ancestors;³ and two admitted both religions into their country as well as their senates.⁴ Of the three-and-twenty subject districts, only Morat and Granson became wholly protestant; sixteen retained their former creed, and five became mixed. Among the allies, Geneva, Neuchattel, Bienne, Mulhausen, and the town of St. Gallen, renounced the doctrines of Rome; while the diminutive republic of Gersau, and the abbey of Engelberg, persisted in their former worship. In the Grison leagues, after great disturbances, and many fluctuations, both creeds were at length admitted by public authority. The Reformation had at one time made considerable progress in the Valais, the Valteline, and the Italian bailiwicks: but popery at last prevailed; and at Locarno, those who refused to adhere to the

² Zurich, Berne, Basle, and Shaffhausen.

³ Lucern, Schwitz, Uri, Underwalden, Zug, Friburg, and Soleure. The five first, being ancient cantons, generally took the lead in what concerned religious matters.

⁴ Appenzel and Glaris.

CHAP.
VII.

established doctrines were compelled to quit the country, on which occasion no less than sixty families, among whom were several of considerable note, withdrew to Zurich, and contributed essentially to promote both the commerce and manufactures of that already prosperous city. This religious separation was by no means, in all cases, topographical; the inhabitants of different persuasions in many places living promiscuously together, and many large families having divided into branches, whose contradictory belief and stern fanaticism have frequently proved the source of destructive feuds and great calamities.

1. *The Boromean, or Holy League.*

Cardinal Charles Boromeo Archbishop of Milan,⁵ a prelate who, with the virtues of a saint, combined the courage of a hero, prompted by a zeal which superseded every other consideration, rejected no expedient that appeared to him conducive towards reclaiming the Confederates to the pale of his church. The five old catholic cantons had already entered into an alliance with the Valais, not only for the protection, but also for the propagation of their religion; and at the instigation of the

⁵ Canonized in the year 1610.

cardinal,

cardinal, they formed a compact for the same purpose with the Bishop of Basle. Besides establishing a seminary at Milan for the education of the Helvetic youths of his persuasion, he shewed a particular solicitude that a pope's nuncio should constantly reside among the Confederates ; and by industriously promoting a league among all the catholic Confederates, in which he also endeavoured to engage the Duke of Savoy and other neighbouring princes, he sanctioned the fanatical abhorrence the divided people were already prone to entertain against each other : and this, notwithstanding the conciliatory spirit of the Confederacy, was eventually productive of great misery among many of the most intolerant communities.

John Francis Bonom, Bishop of Vercelli, The Pope's Nuncio at Berne. had by this time arrived in Switzerland in the character of papal nuncio. He had been received with great pomp and solemnity by the seven catholic cantons, but was refused admittance into the Valais and the Grison country. The hasty steps he took in promoting the Boromean league, by introducing monastic orders for the purpose of making converts, and enforcing the decrees of the council of Trent, soon alarmed the protestant states, who plainly perceived that his main object was to suppress the Reformation : hence when, on the tenth of
December,

CHAP.
VII.

December, he entered the gates of Berne unexpectedly with a numerous retinue, chiefly consisting of ecclesiastics, the whole body of the citizens gave evident marks of surprise and disapprobation; and the magistrates, without delay, sent a deputation to represent to him the danger to which he exposed himself in thus braving an irritated multitude, and to urge the necessity of his immediate departure. He acquiesced, and withdrew before night; not however until he had experienced some insults from the populace. His complaints concerning this reception and treatment were so loud and vehement, that serious apprehensions were entertained of an open rupture between Berne and the catholic cantons, had not the five neutral cantons interfered, and by virtue of the powers vested in them by the confederacy, brought about an amicable accommodation.

1581.

Attempts
of Savoy
upon Ge-
neva.

The nuncio having been defeated in this quarter, entered with great earnestness into the designs of Charles Emanuel Duke of Savoy, who, on succeeding to his dominions, and being urged by the Pope, the King of Spain, and, above all, the zealous Cardinal Boromeo, formed the project of recovering the provinces which had been wrested from his predecessors; and particularly aimed to possess himself of the city of Geneva, whose independence the dukes at

all

all times beheld with an envious and indignant eye. Preparatory to a conspiracy, which was thought the easiest and most effectual method of achieving the intended purpose, des Plans, a native of Thonon, purchased a house within and near one of the gates of the city, and converted it into a place of public resort. Here he succeeded for a time in attracting many strangers, who promised to co-operate in the scheme, and engaged several discontented citizens in a plot to open the gate at an appointed hour to the troops of Savoy, numbers of which had privately advanced towards the suburbs. The eighteenth of April had been pitched upon for the attempt; but the treacherous design was discovered in time, and the original contriver met his doom on a scaffold. The citizens, seeing the danger to which they were exposed, willingly received within their walls auxiliaries from Berne, Neuchattel, and Bienne, and gratefully acknowledged the assurances given them by the French king, of his countenance and protection against their perfidious neighbour. Notwithstanding all the discouragements, the duke still continued to tamper with the disaffected in the city, and to advance troops towards its ramparts; and his general, Bernardin Count de Raconis, had actually planned another attack, in which he expected

to

CHAP.
VII.

to be seconded by some of the catholic Confederates. The day of the assault was fixed for the sixteenth of July : but one of the conspirators betrayed the project ; and though Raconis drew near at the appointed time, and found the gates wide open, yet, having cause to suspect that an ambush was prepared, he desisted from the enterprise, and accepted a truce. Foreign sovereigns now interfered, and among these even Elizabeth Queen of England ; and a convention was established which left the city at peace for a period of near twenty years.

Dissensions
concerning
the Grego-
rian Calen-
dar.

1583.

When the dæmon of discord has once invaded a country, every incident, however trifling, may be converted into a cause of jealousy and contention, and foment troubles, the consequences of which generally astonish even those who have first excited them. So trivial an object as the acceptance of the reformed Gregorian calendar, which was proposed about this time by the authority of the council of Trent, became a cause of serious controversy, and warm opposition. The seven catholic cantons admitted it without hesitation ; but the six others, considering the innovation as an attempt of Rome to encroach upon their independence, peremptorily rejected the offer : and this trifling disagreement contributed not a little

little to widen the breach that had already, in a great measure, estranged the different cantons from each other.⁶ CHAP. VII.

The death of Cardinal Boromeo, which happened soon after, though it deprived the church of a zealous advocate, did not however abate the animosities which he had long industriously fomented. His spirit survived him: and Pope Sixtus the Fifth, at the instigation of the Spanish governor of Milan, sent the bishop of Tricarico, with a legatine authority, into the cantons. This prelate convened a catholic diet at Lucern, where with the most solemn asseverations the several deputies swore, in the name of themselves and their constituents, to sacrifice their lives and property in support of their mother-church. Many, warmed by religious zeal, enlisted for the holy wars; and upwards 1584.

⁶ One of the principal reasons assigned by the peasants of Glaris, both protestants and catholics, for not adopting the new style, will, no doubt, appear sufficiently ludicrous. At the upper extremity of the principal valley, on the frontiers of the Grison country, is a natural apperture in a rock, called St. Martin's Hole, through which, annually, on the third of March and the third of September, old style, the sun at noon shines on the church-steeple of the village of Elms. The peasants, when the new calendar was offered them, rejected it unanimously and with indignation, observing that, should they admit it, the sun would no longer dart its rays on that steeple on those periodical days.

of

CHAP. of ten thousand engaged to assist the King of
 VII. France against the Huguenots.

2. War of Mulhausen.

A difference that had arisen at Mulhausen between two brethren, Jacob and Matthias Finninger, and some of their fellow-citizens, concerning a copse of no great extent in the neighbourhood, proved the original cause of a feud which brought on abundance of misery and bloodshed. The two brethren having been cast, appealed to the cantons; and arbitrators came immediately from Zurich and Basle, who confirmed the sentence previously issued against them by their legal magistrates. Jacob, greatly
 (1581.) incensed at what he deemed an unjust decree, appealed to the catholic cantons, raised a faction in the city, and used injurious language against the senate: he was imprisoned and sent into banishment; and Matthias voluntarily followed him in his exile. The catholic cantons warmly espoused their cause, sent deputies to demand the reinstatement of the two brethren, and their demand being rejected, they
 1586. renounced their alliance with the city.⁷

⁷ They never after consented to its renewal, nor to the deputies of Mulhausen having suffrage in the general diets: a right of being present at the deliberations is all they could ever recover.

The

The faction, which upon this arose at Mülhausen, proved sufficiently powerful to depose the magistracy, and to institute a new senate. The leaders took arms out of the arsenal, seized on the public granaries and wine cellars, and caused seals to be affixed on the treasury. A criminal court was hereupon established, at which Matthias Finninger presided: upon which, most of the principal inhabitants found it adviseable to absent themselves from the city; and these fugitives, in their turn, laid their complaints before the protestant cantons. Although the party which now prevailed in the city had thus gained a decided superiority, and was openly countenanced by the catholic cantons; yet those of the protestant persuasion, together with Glaris, aware that this infraction of an established constitution, was a dangerous violation of the fundamental laws of their confederacy, determined at length, after having in vain tried every conciliatory expedient, and endeavoured to awe the insurgents by repeated exhortations and menaces, to have recourse to coercive means.

Nineteen hundred men, from Zurich, Berne, and Shaffhausen, with twelve cannon, arrived on the tenth of June, before the town: and Lewis Erlach, their commander, aware that any

1587.

CHAP.
VII.

any delay would afford time to the catholic cantons, and to the Archduke of Austria, who likewise favoured the revolters, to counteract his design, resolved, after a fruitless summons, to venture an immediate attack. This was effected on the fourteenth; and one of the gates having been forced open by a petard, about one hundred of the Confederates, with Erlach at their head, rushed into the town, where they were met by the exasperated burghers, headed by their new burgomasters. After a severe conflict and much bloodshed, the latter were nearly overpowered, when one of the burghers found means to drop the portcullis in the gate. The Confederates who had entered the town were thus cut off from immediate succour, and in their turn saw themselves reduced to the greatest extremity. They dispersed in hopes of escaping the fury of the citizens by concealment; but many surrendered upon the usual condition of the laws of war, that their lives should be spared. This condition, though freely granted, was ill observed. The prisoners were conducted to a remote place behind the convent of the Unshod Friars, and there inhumanly butchered. The besiegers meanwhile used the utmost efforts to force a way into the town, and rescue their gallant brethren; they succeeded at length in breaking down the portcullis

cullis with their battle axes, crowded in great numbers through the gate, and spread throughout the city. Erlach, who had been wounded in the thigh, being now once more surrounded by his friends, repeatedly called out, 'peace, 'peace,' and strove with all his might to stop the carnage: but his efforts were vain; the daring citizens still kept up the conflict. The sun was set, and the din of arms, the shouts of the conquerors, the cries of the wounded and expiring, and the shrieks of the women and children, added to the gloom of the night, spread the utmost horror and desolation throughout the city. The burghers, whom their rash audacity had now wholly deserted, brought out their deposed burgomasters Ziegler and Hartman, presented them in chains to the infuriated assailants, and throwing aside their weapons, in the name of these venerable hostages implored for mercy. The women were called upon to join their supplications: they came forth with their children in their cradles, and placed them in rows before them, as a barrier against the spreading havoc. Brave men are ever humane and merciful. This sight softened the fury of the conquerors: Erlach proclaimed a cessation of hostilities, and was instantly obeyed. The two burgomasters, and the town clerk, who had been with them

cast

CHAP.
VII.

cast into prison, were immediately released; and all the citizens who had borne arms, many of whom were dragged out of the most secret recesses, were put into confinement.

On the thirtieth of June came the deputies from Zurich, Berne, Glaris, Basle, and Shaffhausen, and established a court for the trial of the delinquents. All who appeared to have been merely auxiliaries, among whom were two hundred Austrians, were immediately released, and suffered to depart. The citizens were distinguished into two classes: the ringleaders, and those who had been evidently seduced. Among the former, heavy charges were brought against two desperate adventurers, Dummel and Langstein: they were convicted of having fomented the sedition, and committed more slaughter than the insurgents; the former was sentenced to be beheaded, and the latter, who had moreover committed various robberies, to be hanged. These were the only delinquents who suffered in the city: the rest, having given marks of contrition for the errors into which they had suffered themselves to be betrayed, chiefly, as they freely declared, by the Finningers, were pardoned and most of them restored to their former condition: the deposed magistrates were reinstated. The women, who had taken an active part in the insurrection, were

were assembled in the great minster, severely reprimanded, and rigorously admonished to attend to their domestic concerns, and not to interfere in public affairs, of which they could have no competent knowledge. After this the deputies, having made some regulations for the future security of the town, departed amidst the acclamations and blessings of the penitent burghers, and their families. The Finningers had withdrawn from the city before the siege, under pretence of going in quest of further aid. Jacob was seized in the month of August on the territories of Berne, and, as a disturber of the public peace, publicly beheaded. This siege, though trivial as to the magnitude of its object, has acquired considerable celebrity by the minute description given of it by one of the protestant ministers,* who, although greatly obnoxious to the insurgents, remained notwithstanding in the city, where, in the midst of the tumult and carnage, he was sought for in his house, but saved from destruction by his wife, who told the ruffians that he was gone to the market place to join his fellow citizens.

3. *The Scalade of Geneva.*

The determined purpose of the Princes of

* David Zwinger. His account of this disastrous event is published as a supplement to Lauffer's history.

Savoy

CHAP.
VII

Savoy to gain possession of the most important station on their frontiers, had urged them to seize every opportunity which afforded the least prospect of enabling them to make themselves masters of Geneva; but their various attempts, some of which have been briefly noticed (and among the rest, the operation of the Borromean league, which, with other important objects, had this reduction likewise in view) had all of them proved hitherto abortive. Under the auspices of France, treaties had lately been made, which had lulled the citizens into perfect security: and Charles Emanuel, having been admonished by the pope to exert all his might against his heretical neighbours, and confiding in the assistance of the Spanish and Neapolitan forces which he had been promised, now resolved to avail himself of this security. Under pretence of observing the motions of the French Marshal de Lavardin, who had a command in these parts, he found means, without giving umbrage, to station a body of about two thousand men near the gates of the city; and the necessary implements having been procured, the night between the eleventh and twelfth of December old style, being the winter solstice, was fixed upon for scaling the ramparts, and reducing the town by surprise. The scaling ladders had been painted black to prevent

1602.

prevent their being perceived in the dark : they were so constructed as to fold into a small compass, and to admit of being lengthened or shortened as occasion might require ; they had spikes at the lower ends, and rollers at the top covered with cloth, to prevent all noise on moving them. The command of the enterprise was given to the Sieur d'Albigny, by whom it had been originally planned. The duke, confident of success, came in person over the mountains, but under an assumed name : the citizens had indeed received some intimation of a plot that was meditating against them ; but the President Rochette had been sent by the duke a few days before, to quiet their apprehensions by positive assurances of his peaceful and even friendly disposition.

The troops advanced at the appointed time from la Roche, Bonneville, and Bonne. Bru-naulieu commanded the party that was destined for the scalade. Father Alexander, a Scottish jesuit, confessed the men at the foot of the ladders, and encouraged them by promises of both temporal and eternal rewards. At one o'clock after midnight they ascended : two hundred reached the top of the rampart unobserved ; and laid themselves down, or drew up close to the houses of the Corratierie, waiting for the hour of four, when the general assault

CHAP.
VII.

was to be given. A few walked through the streets, and found in all of them the most profound tranquillity. At about two however, a sentry, stationed at the tower of the mint, heard some noise in the ditch, and fired his musket. Brunaubieu upon this, seeing himself discovered, resolved to anticipate the attack. He sent detachments to different parts of the town, and hastened with the remainder of his force to the new gate, which, as had been preconcerted, he proposed to burst open with a petard. The guard at this gate, consisting of thirteen men, fired their pieces, and concealed themselves; while one of them climbed to the top of the building, let down the portcullis, and thus prevented the fixing of the petard. The citizens being now alarmed, ran to their arms, and barricaded the principal avenues. A cannon was fired which flanked the ditch where the ladders stood, and dashed most of them to pieces. The assailants without the walls having mistaken the report of the cannon for the explosion of the petard, hastened towards the new gate, estimating with certain confidence the rich booty they were about to gain. Being arrived at the gate, and finding it close shut, they made what haste they could towards the ladders; but finding them unfit for use, and a second discharge of the cannon, loaded with grape shot, having killed

killed some and wounded many others, they saw themselves compelled to a precipitate retreat. CHAP.
VII. Those within the city found themselves now harassed on every side: they were fired at from the windows, and annoyed with stones from the tops of the houses; and no opportunity was afforded them of either offensive or defensive operations. About fifty of them having been felled to the ground, the remainder ran to the spot where they had fixed their ladders; but finding none that could be of service, many threw themselves down the rampart, and one of them falling on father Alexander, who still kept his station in the ditch, severely wounded him. Thirteen of them, who could not prevail on themselves to hazard the dangerous leap, were made prisoners. Cannon were immediately levelled at the quarters of the enemy in the suburbs at and near Plein-Palais, and the whole of their horse and foot were, after a few discharges, thrown into the utmost confusion. D'Albigny, greatly abashed at this disgraceful issue of his favourite enterprise, ordered a retreat. The troops, perishing with cold, and depressed by fear and disappointment, hastened towards Bonne, where the duke received from their own mouths the tidings of the failure of the expedition. The duke after giving a gentle, though not a delicate rebuke,

CHAP.
VII.

to d'Albigny,⁹ instantly set out, and returned over the mountains.

The thirteen Savoyards who were taken on the rampart, were immediately hanged in the city ; the senate alleging, that, as they had not come as open enemies, but as thieves and assassins, in violation of existing treaties which had been confirmed by solemn oaths, they had no right to be considered as prisoners of war. Their heads, together with those of fifty-four of their companions who had been found dead in the streets, were ranged on the rampart near the place of the scalade ; and the bodies of all of them were cast into the Rhone. The whole number of the enemy that perished in this inglorious attempt, amounted to about two hundred. Seventeen Genevese were killed ; and their bodies were interred with great funeral solemnity in the church of St. Gervais : thirty were wounded, among whom was the Ex-syndic Fabri, and the senator Baudiehon. Theodore Beza, who was still living, is said to have heard nothing of the tumult, and to have been greatly surprised in the morning, when he was told the circumstances, and shewn the effects of the treacherous attack. He had long ceased to preach ; but on this occasion he

⁹ *Vous avez fait là une belle Cagade* ; were the words he used.

mounted

mounted the pulpit, and caused the hundred and twenty-fourth psalm to be sung. This psalm has ever since been chanted at the anniversary, which used to be celebrated with great solemnity, until the republic, in our days, surrendered its glory and independence. Suspicions were entertained against Philip Blondel, the junior syndic, on account of the remissness of the guards during that awful night. He succeeded indeed in clearing himself of the charge; but his subsequent conduct proved that he was not a man who could be safely trusted. The fortifications of Geneva were now repaired and augmented; and some auxiliaries from Berne were added to the garrison. The Duke of Savoy sent the Count of Tournon to Berne, to extenuate the offence; but all the answer this apologist received was, an earnest admonition to quit the canton without delay, lest he should be insulted by the enraged multitude. All the neighbouring states, particularly the cantons, the King of France, and even the Spanish Governor of Milan, used their endeavours to bring about an accommodation. The neutral cantons were called upon to frame the treaty, which, under the name of 'the mode of living,'¹⁰ was concluded on the eleventh of July. This treaty restored commerce and free

1603.

¹⁰ *Mode de vivre.*

intercourse

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intercourse between Savoy and Geneva, and stipulated, that the duke should raise no fortifications, nor station any troops, within sixteen miles of the city."

4. *War of the Valteline.*

The Grison country became next the theatre of a war, which (religious motives being, as usual in these times, involved in the incentives that animated the opponents) was conducted with the utmost fierceness and barbarity. In a government purely democratical, such as the Rhetian republic was at this time, there will ever be either one or a few individuals of more than common energy, or a few pre-eminent families, or sets of men, who, having acquired an ascendancy over the part of the people most prone to tumult and innovation, establish an authority which clashes with the principles, and is subversive of the very essence of a free government. Such was the state of the Grison country at the time when it became an object of the interested views of the greatest powers of Europe, who availed themselves of the in-

"Spon, in his history of Geneva, t. i. p. 421—440, has given a very circumstantial account of this memorable event, with the detail of which every Genevese was familiarized in his early youth, and of which they at all times spoke with fervent gratitude and exultation,

ternal

ternal feuds among the people to forward their designs, while this unhappy people became the victim of every unruly and destructive passion.

The state of Europe at this time rendered this country and its dependencies, small and unimportant in themselves, an object of serious consequence among its mighty neighbours. The power of Austria had now arrived at a degree of magnitude, which justly alarmed all the states that were within the sphere of its enormous influence. The fairest parts of Europe, and the best half of America, acknowledged its sovereign sway; and its preponderancy was still more enhanced by the countenance of the Roman pontiff, who now began to perceive the necessity of conciliating the favour, instead of braving the power, of the more pre-eminent among the temporal princes.

The dutchy of Milan had, by the cession of Charles the fifth, devolved to the Spanish line (1540.) of his family; and had, under three successive Philips, been governed by vicegerents, who felt themselves too powerfully supported to be at all times guided by the dictates of honour and justice. The Venetians in particular, from their contiguity and comparative weakness, had frequent cause to complain of encroachments, which they were, singly, unable to resist: hence they sought the support of the French monarch,

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monarch, who had equal reason to dread the further aggrandizement of the Austrian power; and they moreover endeavoured to strengthen themselves by alliances with the Swiss, from whom they hoped to derive both occasional reinforcements, and a permanent check upon the enterprises of the Governor of Milan. On this score, a division soon took place between the protestant and catholic cantons, the former openly favouring the alliance with Venice, while the latter shewed a disposition to counteract every measure, the drift of which seemed detrimental to the cause of popery.

In this state of affairs it was impossible that the Grison country should be long suffered to remain undisturbed. The Valteline, a province subject to this republic, intercepted the communication between Milan and the Tyrol, the dominions of the two branches of the house of Austria which approached nearest to each other; and the forces, on the other hand, which the Venetians proposed to draw from the cantons, were wholly shut out from their territories, unless they were suffered to march through the Rhætian valleys. Both parties hence resolved to use all means in their power to obtain an ascendancy in this government; and for this purpose, each had recourse to one of the factions which had long prevailed in this distracted country.

Religion had been the ostensible motive, but private interest had long since given rise to these factions, which now began to rage with unrelenting severity. Pope Pius the Fifth had, by a pontifical bull, conferred on John Planta, Baron of Razuns, and Conrad his son, dean of the cathedral of Coire, all the church lands in the Valteline and in Chiavenna, 'held by improper Persons.' The bull evidently meant the protestants who had obtained possession of these lands, among whom were several of the Salis family and of their dependants. These being loth to surrender such valuable acquisitions, soon raised loud clamours: and a diet having been assembled, it was there declared that the grant was derogatory to the privileges of the country; and a heavy fine was decreed upon any person who should attempt to enforce its stipulations. The contest, to which both parties industriously assigned a religious motive, now became violent and destructive. The baron, finding himself overpowered, withdrew into the upper league; but he was there seized and surrendered to his adversaries, who, setting aside all established forms, erected a criminal tribunal, and, by torture, endeavoured to extort a confession of guilt from the baron. In this they failed: yet, contrary even to the imperfect jurisprudence.

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VII.Factions in
the Grison
Country.

(1572)

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jurisprudence of those times, the court passed sentence of death upon him, which, notwithstanding the urgent intercessions both of the Swiss cantons and of the Austrian envoy, was publicly executed. Others were severely fined; and many, having consulted their safety by flight, were deprived of all their property by confiscation. The latter laid their complaints before the cantons, and obtained from them a deputation, which repaired to Coire, redressed many injuries, and, in order to obviate for the future the effects of democratic despotism, caused a positive decree to be solemnly ratified, that no one should, without the assent of the existing magistrates, presume to assemble the communities. Public tranquillity was thus restored; but the animosities of the families, which had given rise to the disturbance, were not allayed; and these have since maintained a rivalry, which has on too many occasions proved disastrous to the peaceful inhabitants.

Origin of
the Trou-
bles.

About the beginning of the next century, the Count de Fuentes, at that time the Spanish Governor of Milan, instructed no doubt by the subtle ministers under whom he acted, sought every means of estranging the Grisons from their amicable intercourse with France and Venice; and knowing the effect of a display of vigour upon the populace, built a strong fort

on

on the confines of the Valteline, which he called by his name. A Spanish envoy was sent to reside at Coire, who, by every species of insinuation and cunning, endeavoured to bring about an intimate and perpetual union between the republic and the dutchy of Milan. A French resident, and a delegate from Venice, not only laboured with unremitting assiduity to defeat this project; but the latter (his state being now at open war with the Archduke Ferdinand of Austria) used also every persuasive argument to procure an alliance with the leagues, which, while it might prevent the communication between Milan and the Tyrol, would also facilitate the approach of the auxiliaries, for which his senate had contracted with the cantons. This event gave rise to two relentless parties, which, under the names of the Spanish and the Venetian factions, became the cause of dire calamities in this devoted country.

At the head of the former were the two brethren, Rudolph and Pompey Planta, two men of considerable influence and energy, but who were more swayed by their inveteracy against the Salis family, which had espoused the Venetian cause, than by motives of patriotism and rectitude. They at first prevailed; the Venetian envoy was ordered to quit the country, and a criminal court was established

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at

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at Coire, which proceeded in a summary manner against several individuals, and whole communities, who had betrayed a bias in favour of Venice; and even threatened to arraign the Bishop of Coire, who was suspected of siding with that party, and would have suffered some public injury, had not his numerous friends and dependants found means to screen him from the intended insult. The frantic populace assembled at Coire; but being staggered by an unlooked for opposition, dispersed on a sudden, upon which their leaders found it expedient to quit the country.

1618.

The Governor of Milan hereupon broke off all intercourse with the leagues, and by the distresses he thereby occasioned, furnished a handle for still greater animosities, which soon broke out in reciprocal violence against all who either avowed or indirectly favoured the Spaniards. A new criminal court was instituted at Coire, which, after declaring a general toleration of religion, sent several catholics to the scaffold, and particularly directed their proceedings against the two Plantas. These men not appearing to their summons, were outlawed; and a price of one thousand crowns was laid on each of their heads: to intercede for them was declared a capital offence; to harbour them, a transgression liable to a fine of

one

one thousand crowns; and should any community venture to abet them, it was no longer to be considered as a member of the republic. The bishop of Coire had the misfortune to become likewise obnoxious to this tribunal: he was deposed and banished; his private property was confiscated; and it was ordered that, should he ever return to the territories of the republic, he should without further procedure, be publicly beheaded. The city of Coire, because it had shewn some symptoms of a predilection in favour of the Spanish party, was amerced in a considerable sum. The heads of the triumphant party hereupon sent deputies to the King of France and to the cantons, to justify their proceedings, and received from the former the most positive assurances of his favour and protection.

The exiles, on the other hand, appeared on the ninth of November, before a general diet of the Helvetic Confederates, complained of the violences exercised against them, and implored the interposition of the cantons. Their antagonists were here confronted with them; and, after a patient hearing and a long discussion, it was agreed to send a deputation to the leagues, to exhort them to dissolve the criminal court, to revise its sentences, and for this purpose to grant safe-conducts to the exiles,

in

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in order to enable them to appear in their own defence. The Catholic cantons even went so far as to declare that, unless the sanguinary tribunal was immediately abolished, they would, without delay, adopt compulsive measures. This peremptory requisition was actually complied with towards the end of the year: but tranquillity was far from being restored by the concession.

The French envoy now also interfered, and about the beginning of the next year, obtained the restoration of several exiles. But the rage of party displayed itself now with more malignity than ever. 'The people,' says one of their historians,¹² 'resembled a swarm of bees newly expelled from the hive, which roam wide in fear and trepidation, and know not where to settle, or whither to fly for safety or protection.' The Planta faction resumed an ascendancy: they came in force to Coire; and in order to retaliate the severities that had been exercised against them, erected a third criminal tribunal, in which Rudolph took the lead. New victims were selected: a loose was given to the savage passions of the populace; and the acts of cruelty that were now practised spread a general consternation among the distracted people. This gave rise to a third, or,

¹² Lauffer.

as it was named, 'the neutral party,' which proposed a mutual amnesty, on condition that neither a Salis, nor a Planta, should, during a certain period, hold any public office; that no foreign pensions should be received by individuals; and that no foreign minister be suffered to reside in the country. This proposal, which was adopted, served indeed to counterbalance, but by no means to allay the virulence of the two contending parties. The Salis faction raised a fourth criminal tribunal at Davos, in the league of the ten jurisdictions, which, in its turn, proceeded with excessive rigour, by tortures, fines, and capital punishments, against the friends, relations, and dependents of the Plantas; and no one could forbode the end of the calamities and confusion which now prevailed throughout the country.

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Meanwhile the rage of frantic bigotry burst out with unexampled fury in the subject province of the Valteline. After repeated murmurs, and various attempts to exclude the protestants from the province, the alarm bells tolled early on the nineteenth of July, throughout the valley; and a carnage instantly began, the particulars of which have been detailed by a great number of writers, and have filled all Europe with horror and detestation. Several of the magistrates, and their substitutes, and numbers

Massacre
in the Val-
teline.
1620.

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numbers of the protestant clergy, were butchered with the most remorseless and inhuman barbarity. Sixty persons were murdered at Tirano: at Teglio the assassins, after having put to death a minister in the pulpit, and a great part of his congregation, demolished the church: at Sondrio they stormed the palace in which the governor resided, and dragged him and his family into the Engadine, telling him that they would no longer submit to the sway of heretics: the houses of all the protestants were pillaged and demolished. A butcher boasted that he had in one day slaughtered eighteen helpless victims. A protestant woman, who, with her infant daughter, had taken refuge in this country from the persecutions in Italy, was assailed by a band of merciless ruffians, and ordered to abjure her faith; but she, clasping her child in her arms, firmly refused to yield compliance: the monsters strove to tear the child from her, but she, pressing it still closer to her bosom, boldly bid them defiance; finding they could not prevail, they stabbed her to the heart, and mangled her lifeless corpse. The peasants, in hopes of exempting themselves from the future payment of their dues, were particularly hostile to their lords, landlords, and creditors; they pursued, like game, the unhappy fugitives, who sought refuge in the mountains,

mountains, woods, and remote caverns: they hurled many of them, with their wives and innocent children, down the steep precipices, and many they cast into the rivers and torrents; many perished by the hands of their own brethren and nearest kinsmen, who coveted their property. The horrors of this, and many subsequent days of havock and dismay, are too shocking to be dwelt upon any longer than the testimony of history absolutely requires.¹³ The Duke of Fera, at this time governor of Milan, never cleared himself from the imputation of having abetted this dreadful conspiracy.

The evils of civil discord having by this time arrived at a pitch that seemed no longer supportable, a diet, which met at Coire, applied to most of the neighbouring states to lend their aid towards quelling the fatal disturbances; but Austria, the catholic cantons, and even France, which on few other occasions shewed so much solicitude in favour of orthodoxy, under pretence of maintaining the cause of their religion, were deaf to all entreaties;

Progress
of the
Troubles.

¹³ Among the great number of accounts of this horrid carnage, which have been published in most languages, the English reader will find an ample detail at the end of the third volume of Fox's Book of Martyrs, in which most of the names of the assassins, and of their victims, are recorded.

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and even when Berne and Zurich at length resolved to send two regiments to assist in restoring the tranquillity of the leagues, the catholic Confederates used violent means to impede the march of these auxiliaries. In this however their views were frustrated, these forces having taken a circuitous route through the province of Tockenbourg, where no one attempted to obstruct their passage. On the twenty-second of August the regiments, together with numerous bands of the natives, entered the Valteline, and the insurgents immediately dispersed: and even the Spaniards, after various and bloody conflicts, evacuated the valley. The Grisons, under various pretences, withdrew soon after to their homes; and the Swiss auxiliaries returned over the mountains, and pitched their tents below Coire.

The Venetians, ever dreading the progress of the Spanish arms, prevailed upon France to interpose its influence towards preventing any further encouragement from being given to the rebels of the Valteline by the government of Milan. They actually succeeded in detaching that monarch from the formidable coalition; and his envoy Gueffier once more made his appearance at Coire: but the catholic cantons, on the other hand, openly favoured the adverse party, which, especially in the upper or Grey League,

League, consisting chiefly of zealous adherents to the Romish church, had a decided superiority: they even sent them auxiliaries; and thus were Confederates now seen in arms against Confederates. Another mediating party, under the name of 'the true-hearted,' arose, and boasted of being able to accommodate all differences. Their first act, by no means a conciliatory one, was to denounce Pompey Planta as the principal cause of all the calamities that had of late befallen their country, to raise a force, and to assail him in his castle at Riedberg, where they caused him to be assassinated. This party was countenanced by Gueffier, and joined by the people of Engadine; and the catholic Confederates, seeing that their presence could no longer avail the cause they had espoused, evacuated the country.

At length, through the mediation of France, a treaty was concluded at Madrid on the twenty-fifth of April, according to which the Grison leagues were to be reinstated in the full possession of the Valteline.¹⁴ But so far was Spain from being sincere in this stipulation,

Treaty of
Madrid.
1621.

¹⁴ The negotiations of the Marshal de Bassompierre, on this and a subsequent occasion, were published by his secretary Claude Malleville, under the title of 'Ambassade en Espagne en 1621, et en Suisse en 1625.' Two volumes, 4vo.

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that, under pretence of assisting the Duke of Savoy against Geneva, it sent additional forces into the Milanese, and particularly strengthened its posts towards the Alps. None of the parties considered themselves bound by the treaty. The Grisons assembled a diet in the month of September, where it was agreed that each league should raise a body of four thousand men, to defend the country against all foreign invasion: not one half of the number, however, appeared in arms; and even these, after a few skirmishes, found themselves compelled, by want of money, provisions, and discipline, to disperse. The Austrians now advanced into the Engadine: the Spaniards took Chiavenna: flames were seen rising, and shrieks and lamentations were heard, on every side. Baldiron, the Austrian general, after having subdued the Prettigau, and taken the oath of allegiance from its inhabitants, rode into Coire, with Rudolph Planta by his side. Compulsion restored a temporary and sullen tranquillity; but numbers, weary of incessant alarms, and the malignity of party rage, crossed the most dangerous precipices in search of that quiet, which they despaired of ever seeing restored to their unhappy country.

The deplorable state of this distracted people was at length taken into serious consideration
at

at a general diet of the Swiss cantons. Here the deputy of Zurich delivered a speech, the spirit of which, had it pervaded the nation in our days, would no doubt have preserved its freedom, its independence, its arms, its treasures, many thousands of lives, and the respect and abundant felicity it enjoyed under its mild and beneficent government. 'The Rhætian leagues,' he said, 'are a mirror for us all. In vain are their inlets almost impervious, and do their rocks tower far above the clouds; in vain are their men endowed with heroic valour, and in vain do they confide in the sacred ties which unite them to powerful neighbours. None of these advantages will avail them if domestic strife rends their very vitals. We have taught various mighty nations how difficult it is to subdue men who are determined to be free, and firmly resolved to defend to the last drop of blood; themselves, their families, their property, and independence: but should we now abandon our Rhætian allies, we shall teach those very nations, that by sowing dissensions among us, they may not only vanquish these leagues, but, without any extraordinary efforts, subvert even the confederacy to which we owe our welfare and security. Can we, without serious apprehensions, behold the further aggrandizement

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‘grandizement of the enormous power of Austria, which already, by its possession of the Tyrol, the hither Austria, Burgundy, and Milan, hems us in on every side? Unanimity, believe me my friends! perfect unanimity is our only rock of security; and with it we shall at all times be greatly formidable, if not invincible.’ This language produced conviction; and the diet unanimously agreed to send deputies to the Archduke of Austria and the Duke of Fria, to request a cessation of hostilities, and a free intercourse among the respective territories of the contending parties. The intercession was not wholly rejected; but it was not immediately productive of the desired effect.

1662. On the sixteenth of January the Grisons found themselves compelled to subscribe, at Milan, three conventions highly prejudicial to their interests. According to these, the papal hierarchy was to be restored in its full splendour; the Spaniards were at all times to be allowed a free passage through the Grison country; protestants were, in less than six months, to dispose of all their property in the Valteline, and to quit the valley; several valuable estates, that formerly belonged to the church, the eight jurisdictions of Prettigau, and the whole of the valley of Munster, were to be ceded to Austria; and

and Austrian garrisons were to occupy, during twelve years, Coire, Mayenfeld, and the principal posts and passes in the country. France, seeing these rapid strides of a rival power, now took serious alarm, and keenly reproached the cantons with a remissness, which she herself had long indulged without the least compunction.

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The protestants in the Grison country were now oppressed with more than usual rigour; and the Austrian troops dispersed throughout their valleys, committed all manner of outrage, and abstained from no acts of wantonness and rapacity that could gratify their sordid appetites. The inhabitants of the Prettigau, who were treated with horrid barbarity, felt at length the indignation that became their independent spirit. They held secret meetings at night in the woods; and though deprived of their arms, and not knowing where to look for aid, resolved to make a desperate effort to free themselves from the disgraceful yoke, and rather than yield, to perish in the attempt. They procured large heavy clubs, into which they drove long spikes, hooks, hatchets, and blades of various sorts. Thuring Enderlin of Mayenfeld headed them, and assembled many who had taken refuge beyond the frontiers. The day of insurrection was fixed for the

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twenty-fourth of April. Baldiron had three days before arrived in these parts, and issued mandates which wholly abrogated the protestant form of worship. The people exclaimed loudly against the intolerant decrees, assembled at the appointed hour, and after much bloodshed, in which several women (as is frequently the case among this people) were known to perform acts of distinguished heroism, succeeded in expelling their wanton oppressors. Rudolph de Salis became now their leader, and obtained for them some pecuniary assistance, both from the protestant cantons and from Venice. The Austrian general collected some forces, and returned into the valley, but was immediately repulsed; and the conquerors, having taken Mayenfeld on the first of June, advanced before Coire. They soon reduced this city to such extremity, that Baldiron demanded a truce, but was answered that he had too often deceived them to be trusted any longer. After repeated proposals and much intercession, it was at length agreed, on the sixteenth of June, that the Austrian and Spanish forces should be allowed to withdraw to Chivanna, and that all the Grison prisoners at Inspruck should be released.

The heads of the leagues met now at Coire, and, on the twenty-seventh of June, declared a general

general amnesty, and solemnly repealed the treaties of Milan: they ordered the levy of twelve hundred men in each league to guard their frontiers, and conferred the command of them on Rudolph de Salis. A new inroad was attempted on the side of Engadine, and the Austrians once more penetrated into the Prettigau. Thirty of the natives devoted themselves on this occasion; they rushed headlong among the enemy, and having committed great slaughter with their massy clubs, fell lifeless on the heaps of the numbers they had slain. Some forces arrived from Zurich, and assisted the feeble remnant of the inhabitants to check the progress of the merciless invaders. A congress was now held at Lindau, which met on the fourth of September: the conditions offered by the Spanish and Austrian plenipotentiaries differed not much from those which had been stipulated at Milan, and were rejected both by the protestant and the catholic Confederates; and even France protested against their being accepted.

The distresses of the wretched people of the leagues were now arrived at a degree that baffles all description. The winter was approaching, and most of their habitations lay in ruins: their cattle had been carried off, and their provisions consumed by the rapacious hosts

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Deplorable
State of the
Country.

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hosts that had at different times overrun their country: the flower of their youth had fallen in the many bloody conflicts they had sustained: the aged fathers, the widows, and orphans, were pining in want and deep distress: the horrors of war were succeeded by famine, and famine by a train of epidemic diseases: and in the midst of these accumulated calamities, they were incessantly harassed by the wanton cruelty of the Austrian soldiery, by whom they were still surrounded. The French monarch having now insured domestic tranquillity, at length turned an eye of compassion on the enormous sufferings of this hapless people, and resolved, in conjunction with Savoy and Venice, to effectuate the deliverance and restoration of this old ally. In the month of June, the Marquis de Coeuvre arrived in Switzerland, with the character of French ambassador extraordinary; and after long protracted negotiations, obtained, even from the catholic cantons, the ratification of the treaty of Madrid; and in the month of October the cantons of Berne and Zurich likewise agreed to give free passage to a body of French troops intended for the Grison leagues. These troops, together with considerable reinforcements from those two cantons, arrived unawares on the twenty-eighth of October, on the confines of the country; and having

having been joined by many natives, marched over the mountains, and before the end of the year occupied the whole of the Valteline, Bormio, and Chiavenna, the castle of the latter town only excepted. Spain had previously, on finding what forces it would have to contend with, and in order more effectually to involve religion in its cause, made over these provinces to the Roman pontiff,¹⁵ who, having accepted the gift, but being now deprived of the possession, sent his nephew, Cardinal Barberini, to Paris, to remonstrate against the profaneness of subjecting a people of true believers to a government where heresy prevailed; the people having moreover solemnly declared that they preferred any government to that of the leagues.¹⁶ His expostulations proved ineffectual: and the Marshal de Bassompierre arrived on the seventh of January at a general diet at Soleure, and obtained from the cantons, notwithstanding the strenuous opposition of the pope's nuncio, an unanimous declaration that the provinces of Valteline, Bormio, and Chiavenna, should be restored to the Grisons.

1625

¹⁵ Urban the Eighth.

¹⁶ The writers in favour of the Spanish party are severe against the protestant clergy, whom they tax with having, by their fanaticism, greatly contributed to the prolongation of this atrocious war, and to have repeatedly frustrated every attempt towards a reconciliation.

Spain,

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VII.Treaty of
Monçon.

Spain, in conjunction with the pope on the one hand, and France, united with Savoy and Venice on the other, were now renewing their hostile preparations, which foreboded endless warfare, and the utter destruction of the already exhausted country, when on a sudden intelligence was brought, that on the fifth of March, France and Spain had concluded a peace at Monçon in Arragon, the conditions of which, as far as they related to the Grisons, were indeed favourable in appearance, but in fact by no means advantageous. The three subject provinces were nominally restored to the leagues; but the powers of the government, especially in religious matters, were so circumscribed by reservations and immunities, that the total alienation would have been far preferable to the nugatory sovereignty. The leagues peremptorily rejected the terms; but among the cantons, the catholic shewed an inclination to adopt them, while the protestant declared decidedly in favour of the treaty of Madrid.

1627. Meanwhile however, the fortresses in the three subject provinces were dismantled, the foreign troops evacuated the country, and the people reluctantly submitted to the dependence to which they had been doomed by the contracting powers. The yoke however was light:
none

none but the catholic religion was to be tolerated ; and the people were to choose their own magistrates, which were indeed to be confirmed by the sovereign, but the confirmation was not to be withheld on payment of a stipulated and moderate sum. In consequence of these privileges, the people of the Valteline, on the twenty-fourth of September, chose a council of regency, consisting chiefly of the authors of the rebellion, at the head of which they placed Robustell, the principal ringleader : but so disgusted were the leagues at the cold indifference with which France had sacrificed their interests at the treaty of Monçon, that they refused the passage claimed by the king for the troops he meant to send into Italy, to support the claim of the Duke of Nevers to the duchy of Mantua.

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1628.

To counteract this claim, the Emperor Ferdinand the Second advanced a numerous army, which he likewise intended to march through the Grison country into Lombardy. This passage was also refused by an unanimous vote of the whole confederacy : but regardless of this faint opposition, the troops forced the strong pass of Luciensteig, and in a few days made themselves masters of Coire, and of the whole country as far as the lake of Como. Perhaps this blow would have completed the ruin of this distracted government, had not the heroic

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heroic Swede, Gustavus Adolphus, checked the rapacity of Austria. The Emperor being hard pressed by the victorious arms of the northern conqueror, and France, or rather its minister, Cardinal Richelieu, being greatly embarrassed by domestic troubles, both these powers gladly listened to terms of accommodation. According to these terms, which were ratified at Ratisbonne on the thirteenth of October, Charles Duke of Nevers was to be invested with the duchy of Mantua by the emperor, and the Austrian troops were to be withdrawn from the Grison country.

1630.

The French after this maintained a decided superiority in the leagues; and the Duke de Rohan, who acted in a diplomatic capacity in Switzerland, was at the same time invested with military powers, which enabled him to restrain the people of the Valteline, who had not yet ceased to incline in favour of the Spanish party.

1636.

A few years after, the duke, with a semblance of great candour and equity, made a spontaneous offer to put the leagues in absolute possession of their subject provinces, upon condition, that only the catholic religion should be tolerated; that the people should have an option in the choice of their magistrates, and that France should, in case of future disputes, be authorized to decide the differences. This infringement

fringement of religious toleration, and the reservation in favour of a foreign influence, alarmed even the partizans of France. A diet was assembled, which, by a deputation it sent to Inspruck, readily obtained a guarantee of the three provinces to the leagues, on the same footing as they had been held before the commencement of this war. The principal promoter of this treaty, Colonel Janetsch, did not long survive his benevolent exertion: he was, on the fourteenth of January, accosted at a feast at Coire by thirty persons in disguise, who, pretending to sport with him, treacherously put him to death. The perpetrators of this deed were never discovered; but France saw itself for a time deprived of all its influence in this country. Spain had, in the preceding year, likewise entered into a perpetual convention with the leagues, according to which it renounced all claim to, or right to interfere in the affairs of, the three subject provinces.

1639.

Thus, after many years of incessant alarms, bloodshed, devastation, and distresses of every description, afflictive even in the recital, was this unhappy country once more restored to a temporary tranquillity, and its independence. The subjects of the Valteline seeing themselves no longer abetted by the powers which had stimulated them to the rebellion that will ever
prove

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prove a stain to their annals, adopted a more temperate conduct, and voluntarily submitted to the allegiance which could alone establish the peace of the community. A general oblivion of past offences took place for a time ; and it may appear an instance of singular forbearance, in a people of such vehement passions, that even Rudolph Planta, whom the adverse party (which ultimately prevailed) have branded with the appellation of traitor, was suffered to spend the remainder of his days in peaceful retirement, at his seat at Zernetz in the Engadine, where he built a large church, and died in an advanced age, leaving no issue.¹⁷

¹⁷ No event of these times has perhaps produced so great a profusion of controversial writings, memorials, and narratives, both in verse and prose, as these troubles, which, though they affected the whole Grison country, have been generally denominated *the war of the Valteline*. Besides those contained in the general histories, we have the Memoirs and Embassies of Bassompierre, de Coeuvre, Roban, and other commanders and negotiators, which, though manifestly written in favour of the French party, must be admitted as authentic evidence.—‘ *La Valteline ; ou Memoires, &c. sur les troubles en la Valteline, et au pays de Grisons*,’ Genev. 1631 ; 8vo. is a valuable collection, ascribed to Anth. Molina : but the most complete history on the subject is *Fort. Sprecheri à Berneck, Historia Motuum et Bellorum in Rætia gestorum*. Col. 1629, 4to. with a continuation to the year 1645, printed at Coire 1780, 2 vols. 8vo. Even the Jesuit Quadrio, who, in his *Memoire sulla Valtelina*, has

5. *Peace of Westphalia.*CHAP.
VII.Disturb-
ance at
Zuric, &c.

Besides the disastrous conflicts which had of late overwhelmed the Grison country with ruin and devastation, it may well be imagined that a conflagration so general as the war which, during thirty years, raged over the most populous parts of Europe, and for which the powerful incentive of religion was either the cause or the pretence, could not but in some measure implicate a country so central as the Helvetic cantons. These cantons accordingly were not blind to the dangers which surrounded them on all sides; and, that they might not be wholly unprepared against the insults they had reason to apprehend, they resolved to raise an adequate force to secure the inlets into their country. In order to defray the expences of this temporary armament, they agreed to raise a contribution on the property of the people at large, without exception of either rank, condition, or age. The proportion demanded was the one thousandth part of the capitals; but the estimate of these capitals was wholly left to the honour and discretion of each individual, the quota being received without enquiry, or even

has brought forward all the facts and arguments that can be adduced in favour of the Spanish party, acknowledges that Sprecher has written with much impartiality. A M. S. in the British Museum, (Harl. No. 4907), contains most of the diplomatic documents relating to these troubles.

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taking

CHAP. taking any account of the sums delivered.
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Lenient and moderate as this mode of taxation must appear, it yet alarmed many, who thought a permanent tribute would infallibly be the consequence of a tame acquiescence. These persons fomented various insurrections in the Argau, the Emmenthal, and at Thun ; but no where more effectually than in the canton of Zurich, where, in several towns and districts, particularly at Wadiswyl on the lake, it appeared evident that the requisition of the magistrates would be openly resisted. The senate on this occasion displayed an energy which, when it is combined with moderation, seldom fails to produce the desired effect: they peremptorily declined the interposition offered them by their neighbours ; they suspended for a while the collection of the tax, but at the same time deputed some of their most distinguished members among the insurgents, with a sufficient force to give weight to their conciliatory exhortations, and, should these prove ineffectual, to compel submission. These vigorous measures soon produced the desired effect, and the authority of the senate was vindicated. The ringleaders were apprehended ; two of them were beheaded at Zurich ; several were fined and imprisoned ; and the people, being now well apprised of the upright intentions of their

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their government, returned to their allegiance, and readily submitted to the payment of the contribution. Ample rewards were, on the other hand, bestowed on several who, in the midst of the insurrection, had preserved their loyalty, and counteracted the views of the seditious; and some of them were even admitted into the burghership of the city.

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Meanwhile the Swedish General Wrangel had actually penetrated to the borders of the lake of Constance, and by possessing himself of the town and castle of Bregenz, had obtained the command of the passes into the Tyrol, the Swiss and Grison territories, and even into Italy. The French, under Marshal Turenne, co-operating with the Swedes, spread at the same time far along the northern frontiers of Helvetia, and were not always restrained by the neutrality the Swiss had determined to maintain. The Archduke, who resided at Inspruck,¹⁸ on the other hand, alleging the terms of the hereditary union that subsisted between Austria and the Confederates, demanded a supply of troops for the defence of his territories: but this, at so critical a juncture, was denied him, and he was obliged to content himself with a free passage for his detachments through the Grison coun-

¹⁸ Ferdinand Charles, nephew to the Emperor Ferdinand the Second.

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try. Nor were the Italian frontiers less exposed to hostile attempts; the Spanish governor of Milan having, in order to guard against any sudden attack from the side of the Rhetian Alps, collected a considerable force, and secured all the posts and garrisons to the furthest extremity of the lake Como. The Swiss, thus surrounded by contending armies, and aware of the dangers which threatened them on all sides, at once waved all private feuds and animosities, particularly the late discontents on account of the contributions, and sent deputies to a diet, which first assembled at Zurich, and afterwards, in order to be nearer to the scene of action, removed to the town of Wyl in Thurgau. This diet sent a deputation to General Wrangel, to remind him of the friendship that had long subsisted between his sovereign and their nation, and to remonstrate against his further approach towards their frontiers. The Swede not only returned a courteous answer, but also soon after, perhaps from other motives, led his forces into Franconia: and the French likewise, about the same time, withdrew into the dutchy of Wurtemberg.

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The belligerent powers, being at length weary of the incessant alarms, bloodshed, and devastation, they had for a series of years inflicted on these wretched countries, listened to offers

offers of accommodation, and sent their plenipotentiaries to a congress, which met in the Westphalian cities of Munster and Osnabruck. The Confederates, though not immediately implicated in the war, resolved however not to lose the opportunity of establishing a right which had long been an object of contention between them and the empire. Some of the cantons, and particularly that of Basle, had often complained that their inhabitants were occasionally summoned before the imperial chamber of Spire, which assumed a jurisdiction the Swiss had never acknowledged, and against which they had repeatedly remonstrated with the emperor. This, and some other points of supremacy, which the cantons thought they had a right to assert, induced them to name a representative to the congress, in order to have their absolute independence authenticated by the general recognition of the principal powers of Europe. Their choice for this important mission fell on John Rudolph Wetstein, burgomaster of Basle, a man who, in every respect, proved himself worthy of the confidence that was placed in him on this occasion. He found great reluctance on the part of the Imperialists; but the French and Swedish plenipotentiaries having shewn some inclination to favour the claim of the Confederates, the court of Vienna, unwilling

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unwilling that those two powers should have the sole merit of gratifying the Swiss nation, acquiesced gradually in their demands; and the confederacy was acknowledged, in the sixth article of the treaty, as a state wholly independent of the empire, and hence in fact of every power or jurisdiction upon earth.¹⁹

6. *Insurrection of the Peasants.*

It is scarcely possible to contemplate the rapid alternation of broils and pacifications, remonstrances and compliance, resistance and coercion, that constitute the history of our

¹⁹ The article is of too much importance to the political consequence of the confederacy not to be here inserted.

IV. Et comme sa Majesté Imperiale, sur les plaintes faites en presence de ses plenipotentiaires deputez en la presente assemblée, au nom de la ville de Basle et de toute la Suisse, touchant quelques procedures et mandemens executaires, emanant de la chambre imperiale, contre la dite ville et les autres cantons unis de Suisses, et leurs citoyens et sujets; ayant demandé l'avis et le conseil des etats de l'empire, auroit par un decret particulier du 14 May de l'année derniere, déclaré la dite ville de Basle, et les autres cantons Suisses, estre en possession d'une quasi pleine liberté et exemption de l'empire, et ainsi n'estre aucunement sujets aux tribunaux et jugemens du même empire: il a été resolu que ce mesme decret soit tenu pour compris en ce traité de paix; qu'il demeure ferme et constant, et partant que toutes ces procedures et arrests donnez sur ce sujet, en quelque forme que ç'ait esté, doivent estre de nulle valeur et effet.—V. Du Mont Corps Diplomat, t. vi, p. i. p. 479.

species,

species, more particularly in those states which boast of a considerable degree of liberty, without being led to a suspicion that a perfect calm is not congenial with human nature. The Helvetic polity had by this time acquired a degree of perfection which, one would imagine, ought to have insured a long interval of both foreign and domestic tranquillity. The people, under their mild government, had in general proved themselves tractable and forbearing; and they had recently witnessed a memorable example of the disastrous consequences of intestine strife, and unguarded credulity: yet numbers of those, in whose loyalty and candour the government placed the greatest confidence, suffered themselves on a sudden to be misled into an open revolt, which, though soon quelled by the vigour of the constitution, afforded another melancholy instance of man's untoward disposition.

During the long and destructive war which had been lately terminated by the peace of Westphalia, the princes of the empire had been induced, by their necessities, to raise the nominal value of their larger coins to near the double of their intrinsic worth; and some of the Swiss cantons found it expedient, in order to preserve a due proportion between their fractional and this enhanced specie, to reduce their

Causes of
the Revolt.

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their small coins to about half their standard weight. After the peace, the currency having been restored upon the old footing, the cantons of course ordered likewise their light money to be reduced in its nominal, to the due proportional value; directing at the same time, that all rents and payments to the public treasury should, for a limited period, be received at the raised valuation. This, though in itself perfectly equitable, occasioned some confusion, which gave umbrage to the uninstructed peasants, and inclined them to suspect the wisdom or purity of their rulers.

About the same time the magistrates, in order to obviate the frequent scarcity of salt, one of the most necessary articles in a grazing country, and the damage that often accrued from an occasional want, and the usual bad quality of gunpowder, resolved to take these two branches of supply into their own hands; and in order to secure the public treasury against losses, to make the trade exclusive. The country people, although they had never perhaps reflected on the nature of a monopoly, were however easily led to consider these well-meant regulations as an encroachment upon their equal rights, and to murmur at the innovation. A duty newly laid upon the exportation of cattle, and an excise on wine, became additional

additional causes of complaint : but above all, the conduct of several of the bailiffs, who being at this time still elected by the spontaneous votes of some of the principal officers of the state, often obtained their employments by corrupt means, and were hence not always deterred from extortionary practices in their administration, raised clamours which perhaps, of all others, were the least ill-founded : and each town and village, the spirit of dissatisfaction having once gone abroad, had besides some peculiar grievance, which, the more trifling it was in reality, the more it was magnified, and eagerly brought forward for redress.

The peasants of Lucern were the first who gave public marks of disaffection. First Disturbances at Lucern, 1652. Bordering upon the democratic cantons, they often, at their fairs and markets, met the shepherds from the Alps, who never failed to extol the sweets of their independence, and thus both alarmed their pride, and excited suspicions against their aristocratic rulers. The district of Entlibuch, which, as we have seen on a former occasion, contained a vigorous high-minded people,²⁰ sent deputies to the capital, to demand that either the coin should be restored to the value it had of late obtained, or that they should be

²⁰ When they repulsed the English in 1375. See vol. ii. p. 418.

allowed

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allowed to pay their rents and public contributions in kind. The senate referred them to a committee, where they were treated with so little condescension, that they hastily withdrew, and filled the whole country with clamour and discontent.

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Early in the next year came three collectors to a village in this district, and demanded certain dues. The peasants seized them, publicly tied and gagged them, and led them out of the village amidst a general tumult, declaring that should they, or any of their colleagues, return, they would meet with a treatment yet more severe. The senate took the alarm, and sent their avoyer, with a number of both ecclesiastical and secular deputies, to quiet the disturbance. These were received by the elders of the district with great solemnity, led to a house of public resort, and entertained with seeming cordiality and reverence; but not long after, the elders having gradually withdrawn, they saw themselves exposed to the fury of an enraged multitude, armed with clubs, and prone to any act of violence.

The next morning the insurgents hung out a white flag, and collected great numbers from all the neighbouring villages: they paraded, upwards of fourteen hundred in number, before the house where the deputies resided, and without

out shewing them the least mark of respect, repaired to the church. Hither they summoned the deputies, and in peremptory language demanded redress concerning the coin; that the monopoly of salt should be abolished: and that the fines exacted by the bailiffs, the excise on wine, certain tolls upon exportation, and some other imposts, be either reduced or wholly abrogated. The deputies in vain remonstrated that they were not authorized to make these concessions, and referred them to the supreme legislature: the peasants persisted in their demand, that their wrongs be redressed within their district, and intimated that their neighbours of Berne were ready to join them, and to co-operate strenuously in the common cause. Berne, in fact, saw the necessity of using some precautions, symptoms of disaffection having manifested themselves in several parts of its territories, particularly in the Emmenthal. One of the bannerets was dispatched to this valley, where he was indeed received with great marks of respect, but had several articles laid before him, which he was desired to ratify. He reported them to the senate, by whom, however, he was ordered to withhold the desired assent.

The catholic cantons, with a view to restore tranquillity, sent a formal deputation to Lucern, which

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which called upon the insurgents to lay their grievances, in temperate and respectful language, either before their own superiors, or before themselves, should they be accepted as arbitrators. The peasants upon this drew up seven-and-twenty articles, which the deputies transmitted to the senate, who, in answer, authorized them to accede to a few of them, but positively rejected the greater number. The peasants hereupon conceiving that they were treated with contempt, seized and confined the deputies, took possession of the principal posts in the country, cut off all communication with the city, and threatened the utmost violence. The magistrates now had recourse to the remedy which the constitution provided against such dangerous emergencies: they sent their requisition to Zurich, whereby they officially summoned all the cantons; and auxiliaries accordingly soon gathered from various quarters in and round Lucern. The insurgents being apprised of the vigorous measures that had been taken, abated of their virulence; they liberated the deputies, and requested them to offer terms of accommodation. These, forgetting the insult they had received, interceded in behalf of the deluded people, and obtained moderate conditions, which were ratified on the thirteenth of March, and restored a temporary tranquillity to the disordered state.

Appeased,

While the spirit of sedition was thus for a time repressed in this canton, the contagion was observed to spread rapidly among the peasants of the Emmenthal, and other parts of the territories of Berne; who, when legally called upon to march to the relief of Lucern, refused, on various pretences, to obey the summons. From Thun in the south, to Bruck at the northern extremity of the canton, none preserved their allegiance, except the clergy, the municipal towns, and some opulent freeholders. While Zurich was devising means for bringing about a compromise, Shaffhausen, Basle, and Mulhausen, fomented the discontents by sending considerable bodies of armed men to Bruck and Arau, and urging the necessity of speedy coercion. The peasants spread the alarm throughout the country, came in force towards Arau, and exclaimed loudly against the intervention of foreign troops. The burghers of the towns on the Aar, having upon this engaged to defend their own walls, the auxiliaries withdrew.

The insurgents having gained this point, acquired additional audacity, and roamed throughout the country in wild disorder. Their numerous swarms were compared to the boisterous ocean, which alternately swells into tremendous billows, and again subsides into deep gulfs,

The Peasants of Berne revolt.

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gulfs, both equally menacing destruction: they formed an assembly at Langenthal, which sent deputies to Berne to propose terms; declaring at the same time, that should their emissaries be detained, or any ways molested, they would immediately retaliate on the bailiffs, who, having remained on their posts, were within their power. This conference, and several subsequent meetings, proved ineffectual; the demands of the insurgents, as usual, rising in proportion as the government shewed a disposition to concede. Their leaders applied to France for aid, and offered an alliance; but De la Barde, the French ambassador, rejected the offer with disdain, and promised to co-operate earnestly with the magistrates against the seditious rabble. Meanwhile the deputies of the protestant cantons, with Waser, the burgo-master of Zurich, at their head, arrived at Berne: they urged the necessity of mutual concessions, and on the twenty-fifth of March actually brought about a compromise. The deputies of the insurgents were, with much reluctance, prevailed upon to make a previous atonement to the injured honour of the sovereign, and to ask forgiveness of the assembled council on their knees: they then laid open their complaints, some of which were immediately redressed, and others were reserved for future consideration.

This accommodation had scarcely been concluded, when the peasants of Lucern renewed their seditious practices, and spread tumult and rebellion throughout the greatest part of the confederate states. No sooner had the people of Entlibuch, and three other bailiwicks, heard the award of the arbitrators, than they exclaimed against several articles, and declared their determined purpose to resist them all: they not only resumed their clubs, but sent private emissaries to most parts of Swisserland, to excite the country people against their magistrates. The subjects of Berne were foremost in joining the conspiracy: they reprobated the genuflexion of their deputies before the sovereign council, and refused the avowal of submission demanded of them. Numbers of them assembled on the thirteenth of April, at Sumiswald in the Emmenthal, and were met by deputies from various districts of Lucern, Basle, and Soleure, which had broken out in open rebellion. They here chose Nicholas Leuenberger, a peasant of Schoenholz, in the parish of Ruderswyl for their leader; and agreed on several points, which, considering the nature of the meeting, had more moderation in them than could have been expected. They held a second meeting, on the thirteenth of April, at Hutwyl, and summoned all the subjects of the confede-

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Joined by
those of
Lucern.

Headed
by Leuen-
berger.

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rate states to join in the common cause. They now proceeded to station guards, to break open letters, to detain messengers, and to seize all the burghers of Berne that came within their reach. They drove one of the bailiffs from his residence; at Wangen they insulted and mangled all those who refused to join them; and advancing up the Aar, spread consternation to the very gates of Berne, which, however, the magistrates never ordered to be shut, still admitting free passage to the insurgents as well as to their loyal citizens. The insolence of the leaders grew to a pitch that became offensive even to some of their own adherents. Another meeting was held at Hutwyl on the fourth of May, which called upon the magistrates of Berne to send a deputation, charging them withal to select for this purpose men of conciliating dispositions, and naming those that would be most acceptable.

Various
Negotia-
tions.

A general diet of the confederacy was meanwhile held at Baden, which offered to negotiate with the malcontents, and to take the most effectual steps towards terminating the unhappy differences. The peasants of Lucern sent deputies, but with instructions not to recede from a single point of their demands. No one appeared in behalf of the Berners; and thus were the pacific intentions of the diet wholly frustrated.

The magistrates of Berne were at the same time so desirous to restore tranquillity by means of friendly negotiation, that they readily agreed to treat with the insurgents; and in compliance with the requisition of the meeting at Hutwyl, sent six members of their great council, and two ecclesiastics, to confer with Leuenberger and his associates. The negotiation at first bore a favourable aspect, both parties seeming inclined to make reasonable concessions; but the insurgents being apprised of large reinforcements that were approaching from different parts of the four seditious cantons, the leaders assumed an overbearing spirit, kept the deputies waiting five hours in an outward room, while they renewed their compact with the heads of the collecting bands, and bound themselves by the most solemn oaths to take exemplary vengeance on all who should dare to violate the union. The deputies, finding their endeavours to calm the tumultuous assembly ineffectual, withdrew; but sent immediately to propose another meeting at Langenthal. Leuenberger accepted the offer; but among other scornful intimations, he admonished them, in his answer, by all means to use obsequious language, lest they should irritate the people; and insisted that the meeting should be held in the open air. The conferences

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accordingly were opened on the sixth of May, but proved equally abortive; the deputies of Berne declining to treat with any but their own subjects, which the heads of the insurgents, considering the exception as an attempt to estrange them from each other, rejected with indignation.

On the following day the Bernese deputies appeared once more among the insurgents, and read to them a written declaration of the ample concessions the government was willing to make, which amounted nearly to the whole of what had been demanded; but the more one side receded, the higher the pretensions of the other rose: and the deputies at length, perceiving that the rebels were determined to prescribe unlimited conditions, returned to Berne. Leuenberger, and Shybi his principal coadjutor, continued to sow the seeds of sedition throughout the country: they compelled the Bailiff of Arwangen to order the garrison to evacuate his castle, and threatened to cut off all supplies from the capital, unless their demands were immediately complied with. The magistrates made a last effort to dispel the storm without having recourse to arms: they offered an appeal to the constitutional arbitration of the whole confederacy: but this also was rejected; and force, it was now evident, was the

the only remedy left against the spreading evil.

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Hostilities.

On the the tenth of May the sovereign council invested Sigismund d'Erlach with the chief command of the forces of the republic. The troops dispersed in the Pays de Vaud, and on the lakes of Neuchattel and Bienne, were ordered to assemble, and approach the city; and the neighbouring cantons were called upon for speedy succour. Zurich issued the formal summons for a general armament; and the whole country assumed a hostile and formidable aspect. The rebels meanwhile were not remiss, they assembled from all parts. On the eleventh of May they seized on the important pass of Gumminen: some besieged the town of Arberg; others occupied the strong post at Windish; while numbers, being joined by the people of the free bailiwicks, entered the town of Mellingen on the Reuss. In order to preserve a free communication with the insurgents of Basle, they endeavoured to obtain possession of the towns of Bruck, Arau, and Zoffingen; but they failed in these attempts. A body so numerous, undisciplined, acting without concert, and without experienced leaders, soon felt a want of effective energy in its operations. When the force which the senate had ordered to approach from Neuville came to the gates

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of Arberg, it found the place evacuated, and no enemy in the vicinity. The peasants of Lucern, who were not the least adventurous, attempted their capital; but the auxiliaries, which had been called in from Zug and the forest cantons, effectually secured the city from all insult. The greatest number of the rebels had collected round Leuenberger, who had fixed his headquarters at Oster-Mundingen, a village a few miles from Berne. These committed every kind of depredation all around them: they plundered the country houses, emptied the granaries and wine cellars, seized the cattle, spoiled the lands, and exerted all manner of violence on the inhabitants who were unfriendly to their cause. At length the Berners drew out their forces, and led some heavy cannon against the licentious multitude; and Leuenberger seeing this formidable appearance of resistance, demanded a parley, which was readily granted; but this also without effect. An accommodation was indeed signed on the fourteenth of May, but on the next day the peasants renewed their pillage: and the magistrates at length, weary of so much fickleness and treachery, shut their gates, and resolved to listen to no terms short of absolute submission.²¹

²¹ During this predatory warfare, several parlies took place between the contending parties, which proved the reluctance

By this time an ample force had assembled near Zurich, consisting of five thousand men from the catholic, and eight thousand from the other cantons: the former were led by General Zweyer of Uri, a man of tried abilities, both in the field and cabinet; and the latter, by General Werdmuller of Zurich, who took the command of the whole army. On the twenty-first of May, Werdmuller advanced before Mellingen, and the insurgents immediately fled towards Lenzburg: they tolled all the alarm bells, and sent a letter to Berne, complaining, in the usual style of rebels, that the government had broken their faith towards them, and denounced God's vengeance against such perfidy. To various other extravagant invocations they added, ' We implore the most holy Trinity, from the inmost of our hearts, to grant us grace and vigour to maintain our just rights, to repel the armies of our relentless foes, and to sink them into the bottom of the sea, as it formerly did the host of Pharaoh !

luctance of the government of Berne to proceed to extremities. They are circumstantially related by Lauffer and Meister, but as they were all, in the end, nugatory and of no effect, the reader will probably be pleased to be dispensed with the particulars of them, as well as of the alternate insolence and pusillanimity of the insurgents, according as their prospects were either favourable or gloomy.

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‘ May God lead us, his people, whom he has
‘ redeemed with his roseate blood, through this
‘ tribulation, this stormy sea of gore, and vin-
‘ dicate a cause, in which we are resolved to
‘ stake our honour, our property, and our lives !’

On the twenty-third, Werdmuller advanced some parties towards the posts of the insurgents, who, not knowing how to repel them, immediately demanded to treat. On the following day however, such numbers having flocked to their standards, as to render their army near twenty thousand strong, they rejected the conference that had been agreed upon; and Leuenberger and Shybi resolved once more to adopt offensive measures. The insurgents immediately attacked the town of Zoffingen, in hopes to cut off the communication between the upper and lower Argau, but they failed in this attempt; nor were they more successful at Meltingen, where they were repulsed with loss, having felt the destructive effects of the heavy cannon of the Confederates. They now again offered to treat, and on the twenty-fifth sent forty deputies to the camp of Werdmuller. They proposed their terms; but the council of war replied, that it was not for rebels to exact conditions; that they should all, without delay, return to their several homes, and leave the adjustment of the differences, and the punishment

ment of the ringleaders, to the discretion of the magistrates. The deputies ostensibly submitted to these terms, and agreed that the insurgents should lay down their arms. CHAP.
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The troops of Berne had meanwhile encamped at Wangen, and Leuenberger, anxious to extricate himself from the dangers which pressed upon him on every side, sent a letter to Berne to implore mercy, but at the same time claiming the conditions of preceding compromises: on the same day he wrote also to the council of war at Mellingen, declaring that, upon a general amnesty, he would abstain from all hostilities, and dismiss his associates. The magistrates of Berne answered, that the rebels had forfeited every concession that had been made them in former treaties; and that they must abide the fate of arms. Erlach advanced to Langenthal, and drove the insurgents before him to the village of Herzogenbuchssee. Here they made a stand; and here the battle was fought, which put an end to the disturbances that at one time had threatened the total subversion of the government. Erlach, with a view of surrounding the rebels, and reducing them without bloodshed, approached them in three columns; but they resisted each of them with great bravery: wherever they were compelled to yield, they obstinately disputed every hedge. The Insurgents defeated.

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hedge and ditch ; and being driven to the village, withdrew from house to house, defending each of them to the last extremity. Being at length driven towards the church, they availed themselves of a strong wall that surrounded the burying-ground, and made a desperate stand : they fought like lions ; but being at length overpowered, they set fire to the village, and fled into the woods. Sixty of them were taken, and proceeded against in a summary manner by a council of war, which ordered several of them to be instantly put to death, and punished others by fines, imprisonment, and exile. The arms were now delivered in at the castles ; many of the ringleaders were surrendered ; and the oath of allegiance was repeated in every district. Seven of the chiefs, men of a venerable aspect, with hoary heads and spreading beards, were conducted to Basle, and there publicly beheaded : they acknowledged their guilt, and prayed of God and the magistrates to forgive them. Shybi was taken in Entlibuch, and brought before a council of war at Zoffigen, where he was sentenced to death and executed. Leuenberger, after his defeat, had returned to his home, where he hoped to lay concealed ; but was betrayed by a fellow conspirator and neighbour, and seized in the night by the bailiff, who sent him, together with various

various papers found in his house, to the prison at Berne. He persevered long in his audacity; but the rack at length extorted from him a confession of the whole proceeding, the names of the principal agitators, and an avowal of the dangerous designs of the revolvers: his papers confirmed his guilt: he was sentenced to be beheaded. His head, together with the written document of the conspiracy, were nailed to the gallows; and his limbs were exposed on the highways. The peasant who officiated as his secretary was likewise beheaded, and another of the leaders was hanged. The rebels of Lucern, among whom were even some of the burghers, were, at the intercession of the four neighbouring cantons, admitted to a lenient compromise. Those of Entlibuch alone persisted in their contumacy, until they were compelled by force to accept of terms, less favourable indeed, but yet far from rigorous.

Many of the insurgents had fled out of the country, and about forty of them were seen near Frankfort, who declared that they were going to the Duke of Lorrain, upon whom they hoped to prevail to invade their country, and avenge their cause: but the emperor,²² reprobating the cause of rebels, published a ma-

²² Ferdinand the Third,

nifesto,

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nifesto, banishing those who should take refuge in his dominions, and calling upon all his dependents to use the same precaution. This measure was the more important, as it prevented the interference of several states, who might have thought it their interest to foment the troubles which had threatened to subvert the government and constitution of the confederacy.

7. *Miscellaneous Incidents.*

Although the event related in the preceding section had no immediate reference to the Reformation, yet it was surely of too great a magnitude, and affords matter of too much serious meditation to the contemplative mind, to be wholly omitted in its chronological order. Our notice will now be attracted by incidents which, while they manifest the anxious zeal of the protestant Confederates for the furtherance of the religion they had adopted, will at the same time prove the estimation in which they were held by the distant powers, who, in many instances, appear to have considered them as the most strenuous supporters, and indeed the chief prop of the regenerated church.

Stockar's
Mission to
England.
(1650.)

William the Second, Prince of Orange, son-in-law to King Charles the First, died about
this

this time, leaving only an infant son²³ to inherit the high honours and offices he had held in the United Provinces: and Cromwell, ever solicitous to reduce the power, and lower the consequence of every branch of the royal house, endeavoured to persuade the Batavians that their government stood in no more need of a stadtholder, than that of England, as he asserted, did of a king. A strong party in Holland, however, could not be brought to acquiesce in this assumption; and the disputes occasioned by this contrariety of opinion gave rise to a bloody war. The protestants in the Alps, foreboding the fatal consequences that would necessarily accrue to the cause of religion from a conflict between two nations which, being allied by the bonds of faith, ought to have warmly co-operated in support of its interests, beheld the contest with deep regret, and resolved, if possible, to check its progress by their mediation. After several epistolary admonitions to both parties, which failed of the desired success, they at length resolved to send a delegate, amply qualified and instructed, to soothe the animosities that prevailed in both countries, and to use the best means that could be devised to bring about a reconciliation.

²³ Afterwards King William the Third.

Their

CHAP.
VII

1653.

Their choice for this purpose fell upon John Jacob Stockar, Greffier of Shaffhausen, whose success in this delicate negotiation fully justified the appointment, and the high estimation in which he was held by his countrymen. He set out on his mission upon the twentieth of February, and to avoid the disturbances that prevailed in France, travelled through Germany. At Hamburg he met Langerfeld, a Swedish minister, sent by Queen Christina for the same purpose of appeasing this unhappy strife. Wishing to anticipate this coadjutor, Stocker made all possible dispatch to Dunkirk, and there embarked. Being arrived in London, he was immediately conducted to the speaker Lenthal by John Duræus, the zealous advocate of an union between all the protestant churches; and it was not long before Cromwell admitted him to an audience. Not being attended by a suitable retinue, he declined the honours of a public character, and conferred privately with eight members of the privy council, who were deputed for the purpose. He met with great obstacles in his negotiation, insomuch that, despairing of success, he made a report to his superiors, which induced them to recall him; but, having postponed his departure till after Cromwell had obtained the protectorship, he had the satisfaction of seeing the wished-for
pacification

pacification concluded, and of being assured by the usurper that he had been greatly instrumental in bringing about that happy event. Cromwell sought his conversation, and drew from him much information concerning the Swiss governments and their policy. The honours paid him far exceeded those that were bestowed upon the Venetian minister. He was dismissed with unusual presents, and sent to Holland in a frigate. He then repaired to the Hague, where he was received with cordiality and respect. The people flocked around him, to see 'the honest Swiss who came from his mountains for the generous purpose of pacification and harmony.' He effected the ratification of the treaty, and returning to his native city, received the thanks of his employers. Duræus, accompanied by John Pell, the famed mathematician, came soon after with credentials to Swisserland, to negotiate the union of the churches; but their endeavours proved ineffectual.

CHAP.
VII.
1654.

Another society of protestants soon after experienced a persecution, which called forth the commiseration and earnest interference of the cantons. The inhabitants of Luserna, Angrogna, Torre, Campiglione, and other towns and villages of Piedmont, who had embraced the Reformation, and were known by the name

Interference in
favour of
the Vaudois.

1655.

of

CHAP.
VII.

of the Vaudois, were, by order of their duke, compelled, in the depth of winter, to abandon their dwellings, and with their wives and children, either to fly to remote places assigned, but which could not contain them, or to resort to woods and caverns, where many of them perished of cold and hunger. Many, urged by the extremity of want, preferred encountering the dangers of the persecution to a lingering death, and returned to their houses, which they found completely despoiled of all they had left behind them. The four reformed cantons being apprised of the sufferings of this people, not only petitioned their sovereign to restore them, but also dispatched urgent solicitations to the other protestant states to intercede in their behalf, and to contribute towards the relief of which they were in immediate want. Their charitable endeavours were crowned with success: Cromwell in particular supplied ample sums: and the unhappy sufferers who had survived the calamity were reinstated in their habitations, and allowed to enjoy a tranquillity, which however was not of long duration.

The Defen-
sional.

The Swiss, as long as the county of Burgundy remained in the possession of the Spanish monarchy, felt little apprehension concerning the safety of their western frontier; and, con-
fiding

riding in the natural strength of most of their other boundaries, had not yet established any general rule for the defence of their country against invasion. The unexpected seizure of that contiguous province, by Lewis the Fourteenth, although it was soon after restored at the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, first roused their apprehensions, and induced them to consider of a set of ordinances for effectually combining their forces, in case of an attack from foreign powers. At a general diet held at Baden, a regulation was accordingly agreed upon, which, under the name of the *Defensional*, has to our days been considered as the military code for the protection of the country. The quota of men to be supplied by every canton and its dependencies was here stipulated:²¹ the numbers that were to assemble at the first summons were rated so as to form an aggregate of thirteen thousand four hundred men; and at a second and third requisition, this number was to be doubled and trebled. Stations were assigned for the rendezvous of the troops; the number and appointment of officers was provided for; articles of war were framed for enforcing subordination and discipline; and ample powers were vested in a council of war for speedy and vigorous ex-

1662.

²¹ For these numbers see the Statistical Tables in the next Chapter.

ertions.

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VII.

1673.

The For-
mula Con-
sensus.

ertions. At a subsequent diet, provision was made for the fortification of the passes and frontier towns, and the supply of stores and ammunition; and funds were assigned for the expences necessary in case of an emergency.

The most arrogant of men, if he ever seriously reflects on the capacity of his mental powers, will no doubt be compelled to admit the enormous, or rather incommensurate disproportion between the nature and attributes of the divinity, and the limited extent of the faculties of the human mind. This necessarily implies, in the religion dictated by God himself, a set of doctrinal points, which the most powerful energies of the human intellects cannot compass: and hence revelation must be expected to contain some mysteries, which, provided the rules of practice necessary for our salvation are sufficiently obvious, it will be our duty to admit on traditional evidence; to believe, and not to scrutinize. The protestant clergy, who, having derived their tenets from the purest source, the manifestation of God's will in holy writ, ought more than others to have admitted this important limitation, did not however abstain from controversies, and even sometimes from persecutions respecting the most abstruse points of faith; and thus the doctrines of the trinity, of predestination, of grace,

grace, atonement, and others equally inscrutable, soon became the grounds of schisms in the church, which true Christian forbearance might have obviated. To prevent an infinite divergency of opinions, each sect, when it had acquired an establishment, thought it necessary to propose a test of conformity to which its votaries should be restricted. Thus the confession of Augsburg, the decrees of the synod of Dort, the thirty-nine articles of the Anglican church, and the creed promulgated by Calvin, Farel, and Bullinger, were brought forward as standards of faith and ecclesiastical discipline, to obviate the pernicious effects of endless controversy. The latter of these, however, was soon found inadequate to insure the tranquillity of the Helvetic church, where recently the new-fangled doctrines on election propagated by Moses Amyraut, and certain doubts of Lewis Capello concerning the vocal points in the Hebrew text, had excited some dangerous dissensions. The clergy, among whom John Henry Heidegger took the lead, after much correspondence and many conferences, at length framed a code, consisting of five-and-twenty articles, which, under the name of the *Formula Consensus*, was confirmed by a synod at Zurich, and soon after adopted by the three other cantons, the protestants of Glaris and Appenzel,

1675.

CHAP. VII. the Grisons, St. Gallen, Mulhausen, Bienne, and Neuchattel. Although it was proposed, as the rule of faith and discipline, to be subscribed by all who entered into orders, yet, except at Berne and Zurich, it soon received some modifications, which were sanctioned by the magistrates. A striking instance was soon after given by the cantons how limited their forbearance was in matters of religion. An edict had been published in Sweden, ordering that all children should be baptized by Lutheran ministers. The Elector of Brandenburg called upon the Swiss, as champions of the reformed church, to interfere in this restraint upon religious liberty; and they actually sent a strong remonstrance, demanding a repeal of the injunction. Toleration has often extended no further than a permission to coincide with us in our own opinions.

Reception
of the Hu-
genots,

In no instance did the tender solicitude of the protestant Confederates, in favour of their persecuted brethren, manifest itself more seasonably and with greater effect, than at the time when the Huguenots, who, after they had for near a century, under the sanction of two solemn edicts,²⁵ enjoyed a toleration which had been equally beneficial to themselves and to

²⁵ Granted at Nantes in 1598, and at Nimes in 1629.

their

their country, were compelled to forsake their homes, their friends, relations, and domestic comforts, and to seek refuge among strangers, upon whom they had no other claim than a conformity in religion, and their own accumulated distresses. Lewis the Fourteenth, urged by his own prejudices, and by the bigotry of the priests and concubines whom he suffered to influence his conduct, commenced a persecution, for which a degree of fanaticism and of discord among the unhappy victims, were alleged as plausible pretences. The cruelties practised by the military apostles, who were sent to convert them, grew by degrees to such an excess, that many of them, of all ranks and conditions, encountered the greatest difficulties and dangers, in order to avoid the horrors of the inhuman *Dragonades*, to which they had been of late exposed. Many fled to England and Holland; but the greatest number, allured by the vicinity, the similarity of language, and other inviting circumstances, resorted to Geneva and the Pays de Vaud, where they were received with sympathising cordiality, and met with immediate succour. They laid before the magistrates a pathetic detail of the cruelties they had endured, which cast an odium upon the French government, not yet effaced by a long succession of years. 'The horrid massacre,' they

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said, ' which, on the day of St. Bartholomew,
 ' exterminated thirty thousand of our brethren,
 ' bears no comparison with the atrocious cruel-
 ' ties that are now practised upon the unhappy
 ' protestants in France. They are delivered
 ' over to the wanton barbarity of soldiers, who,
 ' as instruments of the arch-fiend, the dragon,
 ' of whose name and nature they partake, de-
 ' light in dispensing misery all around them.
 ' These force themselves, by fifties and hun-
 ' dreds into the houses of the victims they have
 ' marked, consume their provisions, burn and
 ' spoil their effects, drag them by the hair into
 ' the churches, and thrust those who resist into
 ' sacks, and roll them in the streets : they sus-
 ' pend numbers in chimnies, over slow fires,
 ' where they suffer them to perish in dreadful
 ' agonies : they pour boiling liquids down
 ' their throats, and consume their entrails : they
 ' strip the women, drive them naked through
 ' the streets, and inflict all manner of violence
 ' and indignity upon them : those who shew
 ' more firmness than the rest, they thrust into
 ' convents, scourge them, deprive them of sleep,
 ' and otherways torment them, till they either
 ' conform, or find relief in the derangement of
 ' their mental faculties. In a word, there is
 ' not a torment in hell they have not devised to
 ' afflict this wretched people. All their exe-
 ' crable

‘ crable precautions, however, could not prevent many of us from escaping from their fury : but the numbers who take refuge within your territories daily increasing, we fear lest we should become an incumbrance ; and hence solicit that you will intercede for us and our brethren with other protestant states, and generously afford us the means of resorting to some distant regions, where, being more dispersed, we may be less burdensome to those who shall vouchsafe to afford us an asylum.’

At two diets of the protestant cantons, held at Arau, in the month of October, measures were taken for the relief of these unhappy sufferers. Some thousands were dispersed throughout the towns and villages, especially in the Pays de Vaud, and supplied with food, raiment, and other necessaries. At a public fast-day, ordered on the occasion, large sums were collected, which were appropriated, not only for supplying the wants of the refugees, but also, should occasion offer, for affording assistance to those of their brethren who had not been so fortunate as to escape the horrors of the persecution. These cantons also sent strong admonitions to the Electors of Saxony and Brandenburg, the Duke of Wurtemberg, the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel,

CHAP.
VII.and the
Vaudois.

1686.

Cassel, and other German princes, in whose territories these martyrs to their creed were immediately allowed to colonize, and received benefits adequate to their wants and sufferings.

Not content with exterminating the protestants in his own dominions, the French king prevailed now also upon the Duke of Savoy to renew the persecution of his evangelical subjects in the valleys of Piedmont. In the month of January, in the midst of the rigours of a severe winter, and notwithstanding their own lowly supplications, and the intercessions of many states and princes, the duke issued an order for them immediately to evacuate his territories. Some of them vainly attempted to maintain themselves by force; and by their rashness irritated the sovereign to a degree that proved fatal to the urgent mediation of the protestant cantons, whose deputies appeared at the court of Turin towards the end of February, but were refused all their requests, except the leave to go among the deluded people, and exhort them to submission. Here also their admonitions proved ineffectual; the duke had recourse to arms; and all were driven from their habitations. Towards the end of December, the diet of Arau agreed upon a regulation for distributing these exiles in different parts of their territories. It was here agreed,

agreed, that out of every hundred of them, Zurich should provide for twenty-eight, Berne CHAP.
VIL forty-four, Basle thirteen, Shaffhausen nine, and St. Gallen six. The proportion that, according to this rate, the city of Zurich admitted, amounted to no less than seven hundred. The cantons, unable to provide for the whole influx, negotiated with various German princes, and with the states-general, for adequate settlements for the numbers they could not retain, and received great encouragement from the Elector of Brandenburg, who offered considerable tracts of land for colonies, and ample provision for their establishment.²⁶ The Vaudois, on the other hand, shewed the greatest reluctance to remove to a region so remote and inclement, especially after having experienced the hospitality and genial temperature of the Helvetic dales. Some, rather than wander to that distance, took refuge in the palatinate, and the dutchy of Wurtemberg; but many, yielding to the insuperable love of their country, collected arms, and actually prepared to

1628.

²⁶ About this time (in November 1689) arrived in Switzerland an English agent, named Coxe, who offered to negotiate for a supply of four thousand Helvetic troops: his proposal was readily accepted by the protestant cantons, who paid no regard to the umbrage this gave to the catholics; but the terms offered on both sides were inadmissible, and the whole plan soon proved abortive.

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force their way back to their native soil, fully determined to await either the compassion of the relenting government, or their own final extermination. The cantons opposed, both by persuasion and some force, the execution of this extravagant design, and hostilities were near commencing between the parties, when, the French having entered the palatinate, all those who had fled into that country were driven back upon the frontiers of Swisserland. These felt the extremes of misery, having for a time been reduced to the necessity of subsisting upon the wild produce of the field, and, half-naked, to seek shelter in the woods and caverns. The diet at Arau, seeing no other alternative, but either to admit them once more, or to abandon them to certain perdition, preferred the former, on a positive promise from the head of each family, that early in the next spring they would seek an asylum elsewhere.

1689.

The spring arrived, and no steps were taken for fulfilling this promise. The cantons grew weary of the perverseness of their guests; and having supplied them with money for a distant journey, reconducted them to the frontiers. Hence, however, these unhappy sufferers immediately returned, and having once more collected arms at St. Gallen, Neuchattel, and Geneva, again prepared to force their way to their native

native valleys by different roads. A body of fifteen hundred, most of whom however were French refugees, crossed the lake of Geneva unobserved, proceeded to Salenche in Faucigny, and reached, without any considerable opposition, the summit of mount Cenis: they here met with some of the Piedmontese cavalry; but they surmounted every obstacle, and actually arrived at Bobbio, one of their original seats. Here they would infallibly have been crushed, had not the Duke of Savoy, about this time, in a war that broke out between France and the empire, fortunately for them, abandoned the former, and sided with the latter. Being aware of the utility he might derive from these people, in repelling the attacks he had to expect from France, he not only reinstated those who had thus ventured to return, but also proclaimed his permission for all who had wandered to distant parts, to revisit their ancient habitations. Accordingly seven hundred from Brandenburg, and about one hundred who had settled in Wurtemberg, met near Shaffhausen, and were allowed to proceed through the Rheinthal and the Grison country, to Chiavenna; being throughout this tract hospitably entertained, and supplied with all things requisite for the continuation of their journey. Having arrived in their valleys, they found the devastation

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VII.

tation so great, that they saw themselves compelled to have once more recourse to their Helvetian brethren and benefactors. These not only contributed largely towards relieving their present wants, but obtained also ample supplies from other powers, towards which England was no moderate contributor.

- This, however, proved, like those they had received before, but a temporary respite from persecution. Three years had scarcely elapsed before this devoted people experienced fresh outrages, which drove many of them to their former retreats among the Confederates, who, being already over-burdened with French refugees, thought it incumbent on them to seek every opportunity to exonerate themselves of at least a part of this oppressive load. They conferred with Viscount Galloway, who, at this time, made some stay at Zurich on his return from his residence at Turin in a public character, in order to provide some place of refuge for this wretched people in the British isles. He gave them hopes of a speedy settlement in Ireland: and this expectation induced the cantons to retain their guests till the intended plan could be carried into execution. Four years after, no progress having been made in the proposed establishment, the refugees themselves, of both nations (now increased by upwards of three thousand

thousand fresh Vaudois emigrants) sent some of their own ministers to England, Holland, Brandenburg, and other protestant states, to solicit, in the most pressing manner, either a district to dwell in, or some pecuniary relief.

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In the spring of the following year, great numbers, having received considerable supplies from the cantons, actually departed, and dispersed themselves in various parts of Wurtemberg, Hessia, Brandenburg, Luneburg, Holstein, and other countries, where colonies are still extant, which retain their language, their habits, their peculiar pastors, and form of worship, and have no ways assimilated with the natives. Of the sums which these visitors have cost the protestant cantons, during the many years they were their principal supporters, some conjecture may be formed from the public accounts of the city of Zurich, from which it appears, that above four hundred thousand florins had been supplied by this single state from the public funds; the private contributions, of which no estimate can be made, being besides known to have extended to an amount by no means inconsiderable.

On the death of John Lewis Duke, (who, having entered into holy orders, was likewise called the Abbé) of Longueville, the principality of Neuchattel, which near two centuries before

Succession
to Neu-
chattel.

1694.

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before had devolved his family by marriage, was claimed by his sister the dutchess, more usually known by the name of Madame de Nemours. Her title was indeed contested by the Prince of Conti, who produced a will of the deceased abbé ; and even by William the Third of England, as representative of the house of Chalons, formerly the lords paramount of that province : but both these claimants, and especially the French king, who warmly supported the title of Conti, were at length, in a great measure, through the vigorous exertions of the Swiss cantons, brought to yield to the award of the states of the country, who decided in favour of the dutchess. On her demise however
1707. without issue, the contest for the succession became much more violent and intricate ; no less than thirteen pretenders of the house of Chalons, Nassau Orange, and Longueville ; and even the canton of Uri, which had never acceded to the surrender of this province formerly made by the other cantons to the first sovereign of the house of Longueville, entered the lists for the inheritance. The question was once more referred to the states ; and these, after having established a code for the administration of their country, decided in favour of the King of Prussia, as representative of the princes of Nassau Orange, and ultimately
of

of the house of Chalons. This award was solemnly confirmed at the peace of Utrecht.

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8. *War of Tockenburg.*

The bold and hardy race inhabiting the long and narrow valleys at the head of the Thur, had from time immemorial acknowledged the supreme authority of a succession of counts, from whom they repeatedly obtained franchises, which, probably, considering their own energy, and their situation among free-minded neighbours, could not easily be withheld from them. Count Donatus conferred on them a charter of liberties, which he bound all his successors to confirm before they could claim the homage of their subjects. But none was so munificent as Count Frederick, the last male of that ancient race; who, regardless of the interests of the several competitors, who he knew would, after his demise, raise a warm contest for his succession, added to the many prerogatives already possessed by the people, new privileges, which collectively bordered upon independence. Among these, none had a greater tendency towards their absolute emancipation, than his authorizing them to form alliances with the cantons of Schwitz and Glaris: and in fact, soon after his demise, which was followed by the

Prepara-
tory Inci-
dents.

(1399.)

CHAP.
VII.

(1440)

the severe conflict that led to the war of Zurich,²⁸ they entered into a close union with those two cantons, which has subsisted to our days, and has often been the means of restraining the arbitrary attempts of their subsequent lords. The two barons, Hildebrand and Peterman de Raron, to whom the widow of Count Frederick had ceded her dubious right to the succession, granted to the principal districts of this country four additional charters, enlarging and confirming their municipal privileges, which they continued to enjoy without interruption as long as their territory remained in the independence of that family. This period, unhappily, was not of long duration; the abovementioned Peterman having, on his succeeding to the whole county by the death of his brother, and being himself without male issue, listened to the offers of Ulric Abbot of St. Gallen for the purchase of the province, and actually accepted for the same the sum of fourteen thousand five hundred florins, reserving to the people all the rights and immunities irrevocably granted them by their former sovereigns. The successors of this abbot have ever since retained the possession of this county, until the invasion we have witnessed put a period to all property.

(1468.)

Ulric, who bore with impatience the re-

²⁸ See Book II. chap. 2.

straints

straints laid upon him by the ample immunities of the people, neglected no opportunity that afforded, or that he could create, for abridging them; and with this view he, in his prelatie as well as secular capacity, demanded and obtained an alliance with Schwitz and Glaris, the terms of which were not altogether consistent with the previous union between those cantons and the Tockenburghers. Subsequent abbots pursued the same course, and the cantons shewing a manifest partiality in favour of the abbot, from whom they derived greater advantages than from the people, the latter found themselves, at first by slow and imperceptible degrees, and afterwards openly and avowedly, stripped of most of the rights and exemptions, to which they knew they had an unquestionable claim.

Soon after came the Reformation, which made a rapid progress in the valley of Tocken-burg, and afforded to the abbot frequent and specious pretences for laying new restraints upon the people; the plea of counteracting heresy being, by him and his advisers, considered as an ample justification of every harsh proceeding. Frequent appeals were made to the two cantons, which, by virtue of the double union, were arbitrators in all cases of dispute; but the cause of orthodoxy was so prevalent in those

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VII.

(1510.)

those cantons, that the protestants of the valleys could seldom obtain the redress to which impartial men thought them entitled. In one of those appeals the abbot ventured to call the people *his slaves*, and was not censured by the arbitrators : he soon after industriously availed himself of the religious animosities of the people to establish his own courts of judicature, from which he would no longer suffer an appeal ;
(1539.) and having succeeded in this, he appropriated all fines to his own use, and assumed the right, which had been formally granted to the people, of naming the magistrates. Few protestants after this, it may be imagined, were admitted
(1543.) to stations of any pre-eminence. He was next induced to seize on all ecclesiastical preferments, and claimed the right of administering all church revenues: and after having long exercised an almost absolute sway in civil mat-
(1621.) ters, he at length also assumed the right of regulating all military affairs.

These gradual encroachments, and the supineness of Schwitz and Glaris, did not escape the notice of the protestant cantons ; and Zurich in particular, having been apprised of the grievances sustained by their brethren in the adjacent valleys, and claiming the right given them by the confederacy (of which the abbot and his territories were members) of interfering in mat-
ters

ters that related to the body at large; and especially to religious toleration, moved in a diet, that deputies should be sent to intercede in favour of the insulted people. This measure having proved ineffectual, a second deputation was sent, after a long interval, but with no better success; and towards the end of the century, the abbot found means to establish a despotism which proved equally galling to his injured subjects of both persuasions. Both loudly complained, and now saw themselves jointly reduced to the desperate alternative of either recurring to the dangerous expedient of resistance, or of being oppressed under an ignominious yoke. Having resolved to seek redress, their first step was a legal appeal to the two allied cantons, before whom they laid their grievances, and ample evidence of the truth of their allegations. The canton of Schwitz made an award which, in the main, proved unfavourable to the plaintiffs; but Glaris came to a determination to afford relief to the oppressed, and for this purpose to call upon all parties to renew the ancient compacts, and thereby restore all former privileges, and remove every cause of future complaint. Schwitz at length yielded to the forcible arguments of Glaris; and a day was appointed for the renewal and solemn confirmation of the general

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(1634.)

(1663.)

1702.

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union.

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union. The abbot²⁹ not only rejected the offer, but, when the deputies of the cantons came to the valley of Tockenbourg to attend the solemnity, they were even impeded by his officers, and every obstacle was raised against the intended pacification. Finding that the two cantons would not desist from their purpose, he made an appeal to the Helvetic law of arbitration. Not meeting here with the countenance he expected, he forfeited his allegiance to the confederacy by entering into a defensive treaty with the Emperor Leopold the First, as Archduke of Austria, in which he claimed the right of calling foreign troops into the country.

The contest now involved many parties, who all became equally violent and tenacious; and a long series of fruitless conferences, diets, appeals, and arbitrations, continued for some years to agitate the people's minds, and to impel them to a degree of acrimony, which, since religion had been introduced as one of the principal incentives, it was manifest would never be allayed without compulsive, and no doubt sanguinary means. Even the admission of the Gregorian calendar, which the catholics of Tockenbourg had adopted, but the protestants rejected with abhorrence, became a cause

²⁹ Leodigar Burgisser of Lucern, who succeeded to the abbey anno 1696.

of

of additional enmity and rancour. England,³⁰ Holland, Prussia, Hanover, and Hessa, tendered their friendly offices towards allaying the storm; and above all things, reprobated the armed interference of Austria in the affairs of the confederacy, as militating against the express stipulations of the peace of Westphalia: but their benevolent purposes were likewise defeated by the stubborn inveteracy of the parties. The abbot now ventured to stigmatize his opponents in the valley with the opprobrious appellation of rebels, and thus gave the signal for open hostilities.

1709.

About Easter in the succeeding year, the magistrates of Zurich, who, more earnestly than the other Helvetic governments, espoused the cause of the protestants in this contiguous province, ordered some forces to approach the frontiers. The abbot, on the other hand, in defiance of the chartered privileges of the country, sent troops into the castles, and supplied them with ammunition and provisions. These troops he had, on an urgent remonstrance, agreed to withdraw; but delaying the execution of his promise, the people, early in the next year, collected in numbers, and entered some of the castles with an armed force. At Schwarzen-

Hostilities,
1709.

1710.

³⁰ Stanyan was at this time British minister in Switzerland.

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bach and Lutispurg they met with no opposition; but at Yberg they had to encounter the resistance of an Amazon, the wife of the bailiff, who drew out the garrison, and made a stand, in which three of the assailants were dangerously wounded. The attack however succeeded; and the heroine, with her husband, who in his trepidation had not half-dressed himself, and the garrison, was led beyond the frontiers, and dismissed. The insurgents likewise took possession of two convents, and secured the passes: but anarchy and confusion in the mean time prevailed throughout the valleys; one community took up arms against the other; in some the people were at variance with the magistrates; but most of them renounced their allegiance to the abbot. The protestant cantons meanwhile declared, that unless the prelate renounced his alliance with Austria, their deputies should no longer sit at a diet with his representatives.

Berne and Zuric, who were by many previous compacts, and now by the express requisition of the protestants of Tockenbourg, called upon to interpose in this contest, seeing that an appeal to the sword would be inevitable, made serious preparations for war. Lucern, Zug, Uri, Schwitz, and Underwalden, on the other hand, who had an equal right to interfere, declared

clared their intention to support the catholics, and likewise summoned their military force. John Ulric Nabholz, a citizen of Zurich, who had been repeatedly employed by his government in the fruitless negotiations that had preceded this open rupture, appeared now at the head of some forces, and being aided by Poesch and Rudlinger, two of the protestant demagogues in the valleys, took possession of the monasteries of St. John and Magdenau, which, by their situation, commanded a great part of the country : they likewise secured many other passes and strong-holds, broke down the bridges that might facilitate a surprise, and in a short time became masters of the whole valley. Many friends of the abbot having withdrawn themselves; their families (so far from being insulted by the new possessors) were immediately sent after them unmolested; and the catholics themselves, who staid behind, have freely acknowledged, that not a church or an image had been violated, not a religious votary insulted, and that in no instance was the service of the Romish church impeded by the troops of Zurich. Their testimony concerning the Tockenburghers was by no means so favourable.

The catholic cantons, on the other hand, sent forces to occupy the towns of Baden, Bremgarten, and the whole of the free bailiwicks,

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wicks, chiefly with a view to prevent the junction of the troops of Berne and Zurich; and thus were the horrors of civil war at once spread throughout the country. The abbot also gathered all the forces he could command in his peculiar territory,³¹ and his dependencies in the Thurgau and Rheinthal, which, amounting to some thousands, entered the town of Wyl; while all the valuable effects of the abbey were conveyed across the lake of Constance to Lindau, to which place the prelate himself, and his monks, soon after fled for refuge. On the sixteenth of May the troops of Berne and Zurich advanced before Wyl, and raised batteries against its walls; but the garrison made so feeble a resistance, that after a short cannonade and bombardment, the place was on the twenty-second found wholly evacuated. The besiegers having stationed one thousand men in the conquered town, advanced towards St. Gallen, reduced the abbey and its territory, and penetrated as far as Roshach on the lake of Constance, where they likewise established a garrison.

Having achieved this enterprise, the two cantons next directed their arms against the invaders of Baden and the free bailiwicks,

³¹ Usually called the Old District.

Bremgarten

Bremgarten surrendered after a severe conflict, maintained by the troops of **Zuric** ; and here a body of **Berners** having joined these troops, the leaders resolved upon and planned the attack of **Baden**. On the twenty-ninth of May the **Zurichers** entered the village of **Wettingen**, and were, though without effect, cannonaded from the castle of **Baden** : on the next day, four thousand men, with forty pieces of cannon and four mortars, invested the town ; and two days after the garrison made a vigorous sally, which however was repulsed without much loss on either side. The besiegers after this kept up so brisk a fire, that many houses, towers, and churches, were damaged, and a wide breach was opened in the walls of the castle. The **Berners**, who had advanced through **Mellingen** and **Windish**, arrived now at the opposite side of the town, six thousand in number, with twenty cannon, and several mortars and howitzers. The garrison on their approach immediately ceased firing, and offered terms of capitulation : but the besiegers having received fresh supplies of artillery and ammunition, and among other articles, the necessary implements for firing red-hot balls, demanded a surrender at discretion. This was soon agreed to ; and the forces of the five catholic cantons, commanded by **Crivelli** of **Uri**, were suffered to withdraw

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tions.

withdraw, whilst all the burghers and people of the district were disarmed.

The emperor meanwhile, at a diet at Ratisbonne, formally arraigned the proceedings of the two protestant cantons respecting the abbey, which he represented as a feudal dependence of the empire; and obtained a decree,³² censuring their conduct, and authorising the emperor to take effectual measures towards reinstating the abbot in his dominions. The cantons answered with firmness, appealing to the peace of Westphalia for the absolute independence of every member of the confederacy, and stating the compacts which had authorized them to interfere in the quarrel between the abbot and his subjects. A long series of answers, rejoinders, projects, and counterprojects, were upon this reciprocally exchanged. Several powers offered their mediation; but all to no effect. Considerable bodies of Imperial and French troops approached the frontiers; the pope and several cardinals supplied money to the catholic Confederates, for whose success public prayers were offered up at Rome; while England, Holland, Prussia, Hussia, and other German princes, openly avowed their disapprobation of the interference of the empire in the domestic concerns of the confederacy.

³² Dated June 30, 1712.

During

During several weeks of tedious negotiation, the greatest difficulties arose from the five catholic cantons, who obstinately refused to relinquish their share in the sovereignty of Baden and the free bailiwicks, of which the two protestant cantons now insisted upon retaining the sole property. Two of the former, however, Lucern and Uri, were at length brought to acquiesce in this important sacrifice; and upon terms that were reprobated by their three associate cantons, they, on the eighteenth of July, signed a separate pacification.

This pacification lasted one day. The people of the three hostile cantons met in great numbers, and in a tumultuary manner demanded to be led against the heretics; and the contagion spreading around them, the alarm bells rung throughout Lucern and Uri on the nineteenth; and the burghers and peasants, at the instigation, as has been positively asserted by the Spanish envoy, of the pope's nuncio and the clergy, resumed their arms, and once more took the field. On the twentieth, a body of between five and six thousand men of the five cantons, under the command of Ackerman, a magistrate of Underwalden, crossed the Reuss at Gyslikon, and advanced with speed along that river, with a view to surprise a detachment of twelve hundred Berners, who were posted at

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Sins. The priest of this place, having agreed to betray the heretics, entertained their officers at a meal, and persuaded them that there was not the least cause for apprehension. In this state of security, they learned suddenly that the enemy had entered the village, and actually surrounded them. Unable to form any plan of defence, some forced their way through the midst of the enemy, while the greatest number took shelter in the church, and behind the walls of the burying-ground. Being soon after driven into the belfry, the catholics collected great heaps of wet straw at the foot of the steeple, and setting it on fire, occasioned a smoke, which suffocated many of the Berners, induced others to throw themselves headlong into the road, and compelled the remainder to surrender at discretion. The rest of the protestant army (those of Zurich having incurred much blame for not having advanced to the relief of the party at Sins) retired before the triumphant foe, and took post near Villerengen.

On the twenty-second, a body of Schwitzers attacked the intrenchments thrown up by the Zurichers near the lake of Hutten, and along the Sil; but were repulsed with considerable loss. On many of those who had been slain on this occasion, were found consecrated scrolls, with



with numbers upon them, denoting how many of the heretics the bearers would infallibly destroy. The catholic army on the Reuss meanwhile advanced towards Villemergen, where the joint forces of Berne and Zurich occupied a post of considerable length. Here, on the twenty-fifth, an obstinate and bloody battle took place, which, after seven hours of various and alternate success, terminated at length in favour of the protestants. Their army did not exceed eight thousand in number. Most of their principal leaders having been wounded and led from the field, the treasurer Frising, a veteran seventy-four years of age, took the command, exclaiming, 'Courage, my friends! I am your father: forsake me not, and be assured that I shall not abandon you: let us live and die together.' The catholic army, upwards of twelve thousand in number, lost two thousand men, three superior officers, five capuchin friars, and several colours, cannon, and ammunition waggons. Two hundred men were taken prisoners at Villemergen, and three hundred at Muri. The Lucerners were so exasperated, that whenever, during the action, a cannon missed its aim, they immediately murdered the connonier. The Berners penetrated now, without opposition, into the cantons of Lucern and Underwalden: they spoiled the lands,

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Attempts
of the
Tocken-
burghers.

lands, and seized the cattle ; and saw manifest symptoms that the dismayed inhabitants were earnestly solicitous for a speedy reconciliation.

The Tockenburghers had no sooner tasted the sweets of emancipation from the oppressive sway of their arbitrary despot, than they extended their views beyond what they had ever aspired to, and aimed at absolute independence. They listened to the insinuations of their demagogues, particularly of Rudlinger, who had now become the rival and calumniator of Nabholz, and endeavoured to supplant this experienced leader, who had long enjoyed the esteem and confidence of his superiors. They, of their own authority, planned an expedition to Uznach, and into the Gaster ; and without consulting their deliverers, named Kuenz, a soldier of fortune, to the command. Zurich, however, had about the same time resolved to carry their arms, jointly with those of Tockenbourg, to Rapperswyl and the abovenamed districts, and had appointed Nabholz to execute the project ; but this commander met with such opposition and chicane from the Tockenburghers, that he suffered Kuenz to lead their troops, still following the march, in order, if possible, to contribute by his advice to the success of the expedition. They were too tardy in their progress, the town of Uznach having surrendered to a detachment

detachment from Zurich before their approach. CHAP.
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They were allowed however to occupy the Gaster, while the Zurichers returned to join their countrymen before Rapperswyl. The burghers of this town, who had for some time been dissatisfied with their rulers, sent away the garrison Uri had given them, and surrendered, on condition of retaining the free exercise of their religion, their convents, their property, their former compacts, and other valuable privileges.

The five catholic cantons being now satiated with disasters, agreed to a general diet at Arau, Pacifica-
tion of
Arau, where, after much debate, they resolved on the third, ninth, and lastly the eleventh of August, to accede to the late treaty of the eighteenth of July, and yield up their co-sovereignty to the joint bailiwicks; and moreover declared, that they would not only withhold all further aid from the Abbot of St. Gallen, but also use their best endeavours to incline him to pacific sentiments.

Troops of the two protestant cantons, meanwhile, occupied the territories of the abbot; but these cantons, in order to prove their readiness to come to a final accommodation with the prelate, and to remove all cause of suspicion, ordered them to be evacuated, leaving only a few civil officers for the administration of
the

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the revenue, and the immediate concerns of government. The abbot however declined repeated offers that were made him, alleging that, as a vassal of the empire, he could not enter into a negotiation without the concurrence of his supreme lord. The cantons, on the other hand, positively rejected every interference of foreign powers. The Tockenburghers at the same time, who had now fallen a prey to faction and all manner of insubordination, threw additional obstacles in the way of a pacification, by the extravagance of their demands; and to adjust all differences, and satisfy all pretensions, seemed next to an impossibility.

1714. Notwithstanding all these obstacles, a congress was held at Roshach, where terms were drawn up, which appeared admissible to all the parties except the abbot, who still persisted in his appeal to the empire.
1716. Another congress was held at Baden, where, after a profusion of debate, nothing was effected: and things continued, in the fifth year after the peace of Arau, in this unsettled state, when Berne, weary alike of the long protracted discord and desultory warfare, and of the irksome prolixity of fruitless negotiation, resolved, without the concurrence of Zurich, where the minds of the people were not so peaceably inclined, to come to a final accommodation. The abbot also seeing himself feebly

feebly supported by the emperor, and loth to encounter any longer the distresses of a tedious exile, lent a willing ear to the offers that were once more made him : and matters were drawing to a conclusion, when the prelate, after a long life of trouble and disappointed ambition, ended his days at Ravensburg, regretted by few except those who looked to him for emolument.

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He was succeeded by Joseph Rudolphi, a native of Carinthia, who, fortunately for the reduced state of the abbey, was of a pacific disposition. A congress which had been convened at Baden, proceeded in its deliberations ; and at length, notwithstanding some opposition on the part of Zurich, and the loud remonstrances of the Tockenburghers, the treaty of peace between the abbot, Berne, and Zurich, was finally concluded, and on the fifteenth of June, publicly ratified by all the parties concerned. The articles, no less than eighty-three in number, related chiefly to the administration of the county of Tockenbourg, which, on this occasion, was confirmed in the enjoyment of many valuable privileges. Thus ended a war, commenced upon slight pretences ; but the termination of which was the last gradual step towards the final settlement of the Helvetic constitution,

1718.

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in the ensuing chapter.³³

³³ The treaty of Arau is given at length in Lamberty's *Memoirs*, t. vii. p. 640. Prof. Meister must have felt much gratification in relating, in the form of a diary, the most minute events of this contest, in which his countrymen of Zurich acted a conspicuous part, since he has bestowed upon it no less than three hundred and fifty pages of his second volume. Zurlauben, in his *Hist. Militaire de la Suisse*, vol. vii. has described the principal events of this war in the manner most favourable to the catholics.

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Statistical View of the Helvetic Confederacy:

IT has already been hinted,¹ but it is an observation so pregnant with salutary inferences, that it may well bear a repetition under a different aspect, that few, if any, of the forms of government which have had any permanency, and which could boast of the advantages of civil liberty, have ever sprung from a set of theoretical rules or maxims, digested methodically by a single, or perhaps by a numerous body of dogmatical legislators; but that they have in general arisen from a long series of experiments and practical observations, and acquired their consistency from the occasional remedies applied to exigencies, as they occurred in the course of progressive events. Thus have none of the polities framed by Solon, Lycurgus,² the adventurous Cromwell, and the no less presumptuous regicides of our days, had any dura-

¹ See Vol. I. p. 308.

² The Spartan polity may be deemed an exception; but even this continued but a few centuries after the death of the author.

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tion, or scarcely survived their original founders; nor have the admired systems of Plato, More, Harrington, and many other speculative theorists, who have laboured in this field of investigation (and some of them with much sagacity and wisdom) been ever reduced into useful practice. When, on the other hand, we contemplate the Roman republic, and the British empire, and the gradual perfection each acquired through a series of years, according as experience pointed out the remedies to be applied to defects, against which abstract wisdom could not originally provide, we shall be equally struck with the contrast, and be compelled to acknowledge that a good political constitution, necessarily comprising a multitude of remote and intricate combinations, is not the work of a day, or of one man or set of men.

The Helvetic confederacy is another instance of this progressive, and at the same time, unpremeditated tendency towards perfection. The Swiss cannot boast of any legislator. Resolutely bent on preserving the independence for which they had incessantly struggled from the very beginning of their existence, justice was the corner stone on which they erected their political fabric. Without any refined maxims, or complicated set of rules, they followed the bent of their honest hearts; and by

the gradual improvements of more than three centuries, at length completed a constitution, which while it afforded much matter of censure to acute theorists, was productive of the happiest consequences, in securing the lives and properties of individuals, and the honour and prosperity of the nation at large. 'This confederacy,' says an intelligent and well-informed writer, 'may be well compared to those huge monuments, which have been raised in barbarous ages, by the mere efforts of strength, and without any rules of accurate proportion: they strike the eye, by the boldness of the enterprise, and their sublime rusticity; but their solidity and magnificence are rather the effect of an artless accumulation of masses, than of an exact symmetry, or adaptation of parts. Thus the union of the Helvetic states depends far more upon the rude combination of the internal parts, and the nature and fortunate situation of their country, than upon nice estimates of their proportionate equilibrium, or an elaborate system of political theorems; and to this probably will it be indebted for its permanency.'³

The period at which this constitution may be said to have attained its highest degree of perfection was, no doubt, when, at the late

³ Dict. de la Suisse, t. i. p. 79.

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peace of Arau, all ambiguous claims were finally adjusted, all just causes of complaint were removed, and a general oblivion of all past differences solemnly decreed ; insomuch that this treaty has not improperly been denominated the *pragmatic sanction* of Helvetia. This period therefore, which presents the confederacy in the state in which it approached nearest to its maturity, may justly be considered as the most proper for a general survey of its constituent parts, and an investigation of the principles on which the aggregate was connected, and produced its salutary effects. We shall accordingly attempt a delineation of the outlines of this constitution, which displays a greater variety of complicated, and yet free and effective governments, than has perhaps been ever exhibited within so small a compass.

Its state having been nearly permanent from this period to the fatal day immediately preceding the last revolution, it may not be improper to adopt the most modern statements, which, being more authentic and circumstantial than the preceding accounts, will, we trust, prove more satisfactory to the reader, whose object is accurate information.

We hope to conciliate both brevity and perspicuity, by collecting all the facts which can

be

be reduced under general heads, into the following summary tables.⁴

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I. THE CANTONS.

	Square Miles.	Popula- tion.	Con- ting. of troops.	Form of Govern- ment.	Religion.	Language.
I. Zurich - -	676	175,000	1,400	Aristo-de- mocratic	Protestant	German
II. Berne - -	3,840	374,000	2,000	Aristocratic	Protestant	German and French
III. Lucern -	544	100,000	1,200	Aristocratic	Catholic	German
IV. Uri - -	550	26,000	400	Democratic	Catholic	German and Italian
V. Schwitz -	326	23,000	600	Democratic	Catholic	German
VI. Unterwalden	179	23,500	400	Democratic	Catholic	German
VII. Zug - -	102	20,000	400	Democratic	Catholic	German
VIII. Glaris - -	336	16,000	400	Democratic	Mixed	German
IX. Basle - -	160	40,000	400	Aristo-de- mocratic	Protestant	German
X. Friburg -	467	73,000	800	Aristocratic	Catholic	German and French
XI. Soleure -	288	45,000	600	Aristocratic	Catholic	German
XII. Schaffhausen	128	30,000	400	Aristo-de- mocratic	Protestant	German
XIII. Appenzel	256	51,000	600	Democratic	Mixed	German
Totals.	7,852	996,500	9,600			

⁴ The greatest part of the materials for compiling these tables have been collected from Durand's *Statistique élémentaire de la Suisse*. The measures of extent, which in foreign authors are generally given in German miles, fifteen to a degree, are here reduced to geographical miles, sixty to a degree.

II. THE

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II. THE SUBJECT BAILIWICKS.

ALL UNDER A MONARCHICAL FORM OF GOVERNMENT.

	Square Miles.	Popula- tion.	Con- ting. of troops.	Sovereigns.	Religion.	Language.
1. Thurgau - -	266	60,000	600	VIII. Old Cantons	Mixed	German
2. Rheinthal - -	84	13,000	200	Ditto and Appenzel	Mixed	German
3. Sargans - -	148	12,000	300	VIII. Old Cantons	Mixed	German
4. Gaster - -	149	9,000	—	Schwiz and Glaris	Catholic	German
5. Uznach - -						
6. Gams - -						
7. Rapperswyl - -	8	5,000	—	Zuric and Berne	Catholic	German
8. Baden - -	138	24,000	200	Zuric, Berne, and Glaris	Mixed	German
9. The upper free Bailiwicks	85	30,000	300	VIII. Old Cantons Zuric, Berne, and Glaris	Catholic	German
10. The lower free Bailiwicks						
11. Bremgarten						
12. Mellingen	—	5,000	—	Zuric, Berne, and Glaris	Catholic	German
13. Schwarzen- berg - -						
14. Morat - -						
15. Granson - -	150	40,000	—	Berne and Friburg	Catholic	German
16. Orbe and Echallens					Protestant	Germ. & Fr.
17. Bellinzona					Mixed	Germ. & Fr. French
18. Riviera, or Polese - -	110	33,000	—	Uri, Schwiz, and Under- walden	Catholic	Italian
19. Val di Blenzo						
20. Lugano - -						
21. Locarno - -	205	53,000	400	All the Can- tons except Appenzel	Catholic	Italian
22. Val Maggia	263	30,000	200			
23. Mendrisio - -	158	24,000	100			
Totals.	1,831	344,000	2,400			

III. CONFEDERATED STATES.

		Square Miles.	Popula- tion.	Con- ting. of troops.	Form of Govern- ment.	Religion.	Language.
I. Associates.	1. The Abbey of St. Gallen - -						
	a. Alte Landshafft	124	45,000	1000	Monarchic.	Catholic	German
	b. Tockenburg.	188	46,000		Limited Monarchy	Mixed	German
	2. The City of St. Gallen - -	—	8,300	200	Aristo-democratic	Protestant	German
	3. The town and territory of Bienne - -	144	5,500	900	Mono-aristocratic	Protestant	German
	4. Mulhausen ⁵ - -	—	8,000	—	Democratic	Protestant	German
II. Allies,	1. The Grison leagues - -	2,304	150,000	—	Democratic	Mixed	German & Romansh
	Their subject provinces - -	960	100,000	—	Monarchic.	Catholic	Italian
	2. The Valais - -	1,280	100,000	—	6 Diz. Demo. 1 Diz. Aristo.	Catholic	French & German
	3. Neuchattel and Valengin - -	240	40,500	—	Mono-aristocratic	Protestant	French & German
	4. Geneva - - -	88	34,000	—	Aristo-democratic	Protestant	French
	5. Part of the Bishoprick of Basle allied to the Cantons	106	24,000	—	Mono-aristocratic	Protestant	French
III. Sovereignities under the protection of the Forest Cantons.	1. The Abbey of Engelberg - -	28	4,500	—	Monarchic.	Catholic	German
	2. Gersau - - -	—	1,000	—	Democratic	Catholic	German
	Totals.	5,462	566,800	1,400			
Totals in the whole Confederacy.		15,145	1,907,300	13,400			

⁵ This town was but partially admitted to the general diets. See vol. iii p. 10.

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In surveying the various constitutions which prevailed in several independent states that composed the Helvetic body, it will materially tend to facilitate a comprehensive view of the whole, to wave the order of precedency which had been established among them, and to class them according to their general forms ; whereby, after having delineated the principal features of those which predominated in each class, we shall be able to convey an adequate idea of those of a subordinate rank, by merely pointing out the less essential deviations. Beginning therefore with the aristocratic cantons, we shall first contemplate the government of Berne, which, if its constitution be once duly comprehended, may serve as a standard of comparison for those of Lucern, Friburg, and Soleure, all which partake in the main of the same fundamental elements.

1. Aristocratic Cantons.

Berne.

The aristocracy of Berne so far from having arrived at the supremacy it exerted in its most flourishing period, by encroachments on the liberties of the people, has in fact, as will appear by a short retrospect of the history of this once prosperous state, rather at times relaxed from the prerogatives with which it had been originally invested, than ever sought to enforce or extend them by arbitrary proceedings.⁶ When

⁶ Among other instances may be mentioned the limitation of the power of the bannerets which had become vexatious,

Cuno de Bubenbergh, under the authority of the Duke of Zæringen, and the sanction of the empire, founded the city of Berne, the object of the undertaking was avowedly, to afford to the inferior nobility a refuge from the lawless power of the counts and superior vassals, which, in those times of anarchy and confusion, shook even the throne itself. This secondary nobility therefore formed the first body politic. The

tious, the excluding near relations from the senate, the election of bailiffs by lot and not by votes, &c.

⁷ Prof. Meiners, in his Letters on Switzerland (vol. I. p. 233) is at considerable pains to prove that Berne had originally a democratic form of government; and grounds his assertion on various ancient muniments, among which he lays great stress on the charter granted to the city by the Emperor Frederick II. in the year 1218, in which *the citizens, burghers, and commonality*, occur as members of the legislature. In this however he is contradicted by the most accurate historians. Admitting that at the time, and soon after the foundation, the nobles were in fact, as is above stated, the body politic, this difference of opinion will at once be reconciled; and the government, the succession in the offices being elective and not hereditary, may not improperly obtain the name the Professor is willing to assign to it, of a democratic aristocracy. This is the more probable, as we know of no time when the people surrendered, or were bereaved of any privilege by the nobles: nor is it at all likely that a nobility, comparatively weak in numbers, and without forces, should impose a galling yoke on a numerous people; possessed of arms, and of a free spirit. Many instances moreover have occurred very recently in which, to the title of *avoyer*, great and little council, was added that of *burghers*:
and

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neighbouring peasantry, who, in no small numbers, availed themselves of the security afforded by the wise and vigorous administration that soon prevailed in this infant but rising state, not only willingly, but even gladly submitted to the sway of a set of men of liberal condition, who themselves incessantly struggled against the inroads of despotic power, and who could only maintain themselves by strict integrity and undaunted firmness. This peasantry, and many artificers and traders, who were allured by the same prospect of safety, and by the lucre which always attends a numerous population, became, jointly with the nobles, the order of citizens or burghers. This order indeed was never collectively called upon to perform acts of sovereignty, or even to sanction the proceedings of those who steered the helm; but yet the nobles, so far from endeavouring to retain the supreme authority exclusively in their hands, soon consented, without any compulsive inducement, that the lowest of the burghers should be eligible to the highest offices in the state; and moreover, that they might

and yet it is well known that the burghers, as such, had no share whatever in the government. They may at times, though not *de jure*, have been consulted; but a single, or a few instances of this nature do not constitute a right or practice.

combine

combine into tribes or guilds, to which they conceded many valuable privileges, together with sufficient powers to assert them. Twelve of these tribes, which were usually called abbeys, were formed; four of which, those of the bakers, the smiths, the butchers, and tanners, had the pre-eminent right of displaying each a banner; whence the bannerets, four of the highest offices in the state, could only be chosen out of these privileged bodies. These four abbeys appear likewise to have formed the territorial division of the city; and it seems probable that the eight other tribes had no local designation, but were promiscuously dispersed throughout these four wards. The whole number of families, which of late constituted the burghership, did not exceed two hundred and fifty, and among these only seventy were the truly patrician, out of which the magistrates were usually chosen. Thus secured in the means of maintaining what they deemed an ample share of civil liberty, the citizens followed with alacrity their respective avocations, and saw without the least murmur the supreme authority centered in a council, whose numerous members operated as a check upon each other, and who, though instituted for life, were yet liable to be removed upon any well attested delinquency. This council, with its various

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various branches and dependencies, it will now be our business to consider, both as to the manner in which it was constituted, and the powers with which it was invested.

This supreme legislative, as well as executive and judicial body, as its title denoted, of *the avoyer, the little and the great council*.⁸ The latter of these councils, which in fact comprised the two other branches of the legislature, being properly the depository of the supreme authority, was also named *the sovereign council*, and (though of late its number has always been greater) *the council of two hundred*.⁹ Its full complement was, after various changes, fixed at two hundred and ninety-nine; which number however it seldom retained for any length of time, it having been of late a constant practice, in order to obviate the cabals which ever attend a competition to few vacancies, and perhaps, as Stanyan intimates, to reduce the number of candidates to the bailiwicks, who were always members of the council, not to proceed to an election until the vacancies amounted to at least eighty, which, according to the usual

⁸ We propose, in order the better to discriminate the two councils, to appropriate to the former the name of *senate*, which indeed it frequently obtained in the statistical writings of this country.

⁹ Towards the end of the 13th century, it actually consisted of 200 members.

rate

rate of mortality, happened in general every ten or eleven years.¹⁰ This council, of which the avoyers, the senators, and all the officers of state,¹¹ were members, was authorized to make and repeal laws, to declare war, conclude peace, and form alliances, to judge in all capital cases within the district of the city, to determine all civil causes that came before it, by appeal, and to delegate powers to inferior magistrates, courts, and civil departments. It ultimately regulated all that concerned the revenue; superintended whatever related to the public edifices, when the value exceeded the sum of one hundred crowns; and finally determined all matters that were referred to its decision by the senate. It usually met twice a week, but on urgent occasions more frequently.

The senate, which, as it met every day, Sunday and festivals excepted, was likewise called the *daily council*, consisted of the two avoyers, the two treasurers, the four bannerets, seven-teen ordinary and two secret senators. These seven-and-twenty members discussed and prepared all matters that were to be laid before the great council, dispatched all current affairs

The Senate

¹⁰ The elections of late have been in the years 1755, 1764, 1775, 1785, 1795.

¹¹ The treasurers, bannerets, seizeniers, secret senators, &c.

that

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that related to the police, and conferred all church preferments, and many civil offices: they ordered gratuities within the limits of one hundred crowns; and ultimately decided all criminal causes, except those which were reserved for the great council, or some privileged municipality or vassal. But the greatest consequence they possessed, was derived from the great share they had in filling up the vacancies in the great council; and the power vested in them of convoking this council, whenever an incident occurred which appeared to them to call for so vigorous a measure. Whenever the great council sat, this senate became incorporated in it, and retained no peculiar authority of its own. At other times it was not improperly considered as the executive power of the state.

Officers of
State.

The two avoyers¹² were the highest officers in the state. They were elected by public votes, in the sovereign council, for life; but were liable to be removed by the same body. One of them only supported the dignity, and exercised the functions, of head of the republic; and they alternately exchanged their stations every year, on Easter-Monday. The avoyer

¹² This name, which ought properly to be written *avoyé*, or *advoyé*, is derived from *Advocatus*. The German title, *Shuldheiss* (*scultetus*) is of Lombardie origin.

in office presided both in the council and senate, in each of which he had no regular, but only a casting vote: the great seal of the republic was in his custody; and a provincial jurisdiction¹³ was annexed to his station. In his absence the ex-avoyer supplied his place; and when he also was prevented from attending, he was authorized to appoint a substitute, who however could not be either a treasurer or a banneret. During the harvest and vintage, which were considered as vacations, one of the bannerets presided in the less frequent meetings that were held, both of the senate and council, and had the custody of the great seal.

The German (by far the largest) and the French¹⁴ districts had each a treasurer. The former ranked immediately after the two avoyers: he held his office for the term of six years, after which he could aspire to no employment but that of avoyer: he directed whatever concerned the revenues of the eight-and-thirty bailiwicks in the German district; and superintended the large capital which the canton possessed in the English funds: he laid his accounts twice a year before the great council: he presided in the German chamber of banne-

¹³ Nether-Mulleren.

¹⁴ The Pays de Vaud, or, as it was frequently called, the *Pays Roman*.

rets;

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rets; and at every demise of an avoyer he was proposed as a candidate for the succession. The treasurer of the French district, whose office was likewise sexennial, had the same duties and authority respecting the twelve bailiwicks in the Pays de Vaud: he presided in the chamber of bannerets, to whom were referred the affairs of that district; and ranked among these officers according to the dates of their respective elections.

The four bannerets derived their name from the original function assigned to them, that of bearing the ensigns of the city; or rather of the four privileged companies, out of which, being counsellors, they were occasionally chosen. This office implied also the superintendence of all military matters within their respective wards: they, jointly with the treasurers, formed the boards of finance, which obtained the name of the German and French Chambers of the Bannerets. Each had the administration of one of the peculiar, or, as they were called, interior bailiwicks of the city.¹⁵ They ranked before all the senators.

¹⁵ 1. Seftingen was appropriated to the banneret of the *Baker's* company; 2. Sternenberg to the *Smith's*; 3. Zollikofen to the *Tanner's*; and 4. Conolfingen to the *Butcher's*. These jurisdictions were not under the control of the treasurers.

The

The seizeniers, who derived their appellation from their number, where sixteen counsellors, generally such as had served the office of bailiff, who were elected out of the twelve tribes, two out of the privileged, and one out of the eight others. These, jointly with the senate, annually confirmed the council; and their functions chiefly related to this confirmation, and to the occasional election of new magistrates.

The secret senators were in a manner supernumeraries, but according to their seniority they succeeded of course to the rank of ordinary senator. When any of the six families, which were pre-eminently called noble, or patrician,¹⁶ were elected into this office, they immediately took precedence before the ordinary senators. The great council communicated with the senate by means of these officers, particularly in cases when delinquencies were to be denounced: they were also authorized to put a stop to every deliberation in the senate, whenever it appeared to them that it might affect the constitution of the republic.

The anxious circumspection, or rather jealousy, that prevailed in this government, appeared in nothing more than in the election to the seats in the councils, and the higher offices

Election
into the Se-
nate.

¹⁶ Erlach, Diesbach, Watteville, Mulinen, Bonstetten, and Luternau.

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of magistracy. While on the one hand, they saw the necessity of guarding against the intrigues that generally attend elections by open ballot, they were well aware of the impropriety of leaving the choice entirely to the decision of chance, which they knew might often exclude those men whose integrity and superiority of talents could most effectually serve the state. They hence blended together the two modes in a manner that will doubtless appear singularly complicated, in hopes thereby to obviate the inconveniences of both. The nomination into the great council being vested in the senate, jointly with the seizeniers, much caution was used in the choice of these electors, especially that of the senators; who, being moreover called upon to discuss and prepare all matters that were to be laid before the council, had manifestly an uncommon influence in the state.

The proceedings, on a vacancy in the senate, were as follows. On the day, or morrow, of the interment of a deceased senator,¹⁷ the senate and council met, and as many balls as there were members present being put into two covered boxes, the senators drew them out of one,

¹⁷ The election was properly into the office of secret senator, the senior of the two in office succeeded of course to the dignity of ordinary senator.

and

and the counsellors out of the other: among the former were three gilt balls, and among the latter seven, the remainder being silvered over; and those who drew the ten golden balls were electors for the nomination of candidates. These three senators and seven counsellors now withdrew behind a curtain, where they found printed lists of all the members of the council, who were eligible into the senate:¹⁸ from one of these, each of them tore the name of the counsellor whom he meant to favour, and cancelled or secreted the remainder of the list. These names were collected; and if they happened to be fewer than six, a fresh choice of ten electors was made, who proceeded in the same manner, until the number of ten candidates was completed. These candidates, with their nearest of kin, immediately withdrew; their names were affixed each to a box; and a second choice, by lot, was made of electors, the number of golden balls being, in this instance, two-thirds of the members present. Each of those who drew a golden ball, dropped it into the box of the candidate to whom he gave his suffrage;

¹⁸ Among other qualifications it was required, that they should have been at least ten years in the council; that they be above forty years of age; married men, or widowers; and that they have no father, brother, or son, already in the senate.

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and on examining this ballot, the six who had the fewest votes, and were hence excluded, were, together with their relations, called back into the assembly. Four balls, two silver and two golden ones, were next put into a box; and the four remaining candidates, they having previously determined the precedency by lot, drew them; the two who drew golden balls were lastly put to the ballot of the whole assembly; and he who now obtained the majority of votes was declared duly elected.

The reason of this repeated alternation by lot and ballot, cannot but be obvious to those who will bestow some thought upon the subject. Its greatest excellence perhaps consisted in making the chance of lots apply chiefly to the electors, and not to those who might pretend to the succession, by which means the dangerous effects of cabal were in a great measure obviated; and yet a fair prospect of success was given to the meritorious, while those wholly unqualified could entertain little hope of being preferred. The selected candidates drew lots only in one stage of the proceeding, and this when their number, being reduced to only four, an even chance was given to those few to whom eminent qualifications had secured the marked approbation of their fellow-citizens; and when fortune proved unfavourable

able in in one instance, repeated opportunities would occur, in which, unless she proved singularly unpropitious, the desired object would ultimately be obtained. This mode will admit of much meditation. It has here been explained somewhat at large, as it may perhaps afford some hints for imitation.¹⁹

The seizeniers, who were entrusted with a considerable share in the election of counsellors, were chosen out of the twelve tribes or abbeys, by the members of those bodies who, being counsellors, had served the office of bailiff. Their functions being of a nature that required no uncommon talents, their nomination was left solely to the decision of chance. As many balls were put into a bag as there were qualified²⁰ persons present, two of which in the great abbeys, and one in the lesser, were gilt: these were drawn, and the golden balls determined the election. It appears from some authors, that the seizeniers were formerly appointed in this manner immediately before an

¹⁹ Stanyan has taken no notice of this mode of election; and Coxe, who describes it with sufficient accuracy, has not pointed out the true object of it.

²⁰ The qualifications were, being a counsellor, a married man, or a widower, and having neither father nor brother in the senate. The being an ex-bailiff was not absolutely requisite; and whenever only one counsellor was to be found in a tribe, he became seizenier without an election.

election

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election of counsellors, and that they remained in office till another was agreed upon; but of late, the practice has been to choose them annually, at the eve of the formality of confirming the magistrates in their several offices.

Election in-
to the
Council.

Whenever the great council determined upon completing their number, the senate and the seizeniers were assembled for the purpose, and proceeded to the nomination. Here each of the avoyers had the right to propose two candidates, and every other member one. The chancellor, the greffier or secretary of state, the grand sautier or lieutenant of the police, and the usher or keeper of the town-house, claimed also the privilege of naming each a candidate; and it seldom happened that any of these nominees were rejected. The electors, it may well be imagined, in exercising this privilege, gave the preference to their sons, sons-in-law, brethren, or other near relations, which necessarily secured the seats in the council to a small number of families. Stanyan ridicules, with some humour, the amorous visits that were usually paid to the daughters of the newly created seizeniers, the instant they were raised to that station, previous to an election into the great council:²¹ while others assert, in extenua-

²¹ A seat in the council was deemed equivalent to a marriage portion of fifteen hundred pounds sterling.

tion

tion of the practice, that the senatorial families, by the education and early experience they afforded to their youths, were likely to fit them preferably to others for the complicated duties of a public station: they further allege that instances of exclusion have not been wanting when the candidates proposed were notoriously unqualified, or unworthy of so eminent a station. About fifty of the vacancies having been thus filled, the remainder was provided for by an open election. Each of the abbeys was required to send in the names of those burghers who, being duly qualified,²² were moreover deemed worthy of the promotion. These names were drawn by lot, and successively proclaimed; and each elector signified his approbation of a candidate by rising from his seat when the name was mentioned. An accurate account was kept of those who had thus publicly voted for each burgher; and the whole being summed up, as many as were equal to the number of vacancies, having the majority of votes, were declared members of the great council. Although, in general, the counsellors were chosen out of not more than about seventy families, yet there seldom was an election in which some burghers of new families were not admitted to

²² The qualifications consisted in being inscribed in one of the abbeys, and not less than twenty-nine years of age.

that

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that dignity, and some of late were usually preferred out of families of the Pays de Vaud.

All the superior magistrates were liable to an annual scrutiny, during which, from Maundy-Thursday, when the seizeniers were chosen,²³ to Easter-Tuesday, their offices were in a manner suspended, and the supreme authority, during that short interval, devolved chiefly to the seizeniers. The senate and council, each in conjunction with the seizeniers, examined reciprocally into each other's conduct, and finding nothing reprehensible, confirmed each other, after having ostensibly re-chosen the avoyers (who now exchanged their stations); the bannerets and treasurers.²⁴ The whole being now confirmed, the treasurer of the German district demanded of the great council, in the name of the senate, a new patent or letter of protection, which in fact was an avowal that the senate derived all its authority from the great council. The bailiffs, and all other subordinate officers, were also

²³ In the years when the vacancies in the council were to be filled up, this nomination took place on the Wednesday before Easter, and the grand election was held on the next Friday.

²⁴ This ceremony, for it was generally little more than a ceremony, was called the *grabeau*, a term nearly equivalent to the English *garble*.

annually

annually confirmed in the course of the Easter week.

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Having thus delineated the great outline, or rather the leading principles of this government, we shall forbear entering into a minute detail of the many subordinate colleges, chambers, and committees, which were wisely contrived for promoting the purposes of administration. Suffice it to enumerate the principal of them, from which the reader may derive a general idea of the mechanical part of this, no doubt, highly elaborate constitution. Among these must be particularly noticed, the privy council of state, which discussed all matters that required profound secrecy: the two economical chambers, or councils of finance (the German and the French), which examined and passed the accounts of all the bailiffs, and collected the revenues from all who were accountable to government: a court of judicature, which determined all civil causes in the first instance: and the great consistory, composed of two ecclesiastical and seven lay members, which received the reports of the thirteen rural synods, and directed all matters relating to the churches, decided all matrimonial causes, and particularly examined into the conduct of the clergy. The functions of the council of war, consisting chiefly of veteran officers; the office

of

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of police; the chamber of reform, which superintended the morals, and regulated all sumptuary matters; the chambers of appeal for the German and French districts; and the chambers, or committees, for directing whatever related to the supply of corn and wood, the farm of salt, the tolls, roads, health, commerce, and many others, are sufficiently denoted by their appellations. The avoyer out of office, or a senator, usually presided at these boards, which consisted chiefly of counsellors, and at which the young men of senatorial families generally performed the office of secretary. All new matters that were to be determined in the great council, were here previously discussed, even before they were laid before the senate, where they underwent a second scrutiny; and it was also incumbent on these committees to cause the orders of the supreme legislature to be duly executed. This subdivision of departments was, no doubt, a cause of much delay in the administration of public affairs; but every question was by these means more thoroughly investigated; and this, in a republican state, which entertained but few relations with foreign powers, more than compensated whatever disadvantages may have attended so dilatory a mode of proceeding.

The exterior
or state.

A singular, and at first sight undoubtedly rather

rather a ludicrous establishment, of which no instance is to be met with in any other government, was the mimic legislature, which, under the name of the *exterior state*, was a perfect model of the real one, with all its officers, functions, ceremonies, and subordinate departments. It consisted of those burghers of distinguished families, who had not yet attained the age requisite for real promotion: it appointed to sixty-six bailiwicks, which took their names from ruined castles, dispersed throughout the country, among which Hapsburg was the principal: it had an exchequer, and, differing in this from its archetype, some debts. Great honours were paid to it in all public ceremonies, in which it greatly surpassed the sovereign council in stateliness and splendour. These distinctions it doubtless owed to the consideration of its being, in fact, a political seminary for the youths, who were likely one day to arrive at the highest offices in the state. Its avoyer seldom failed of promotion into the great council. Its badge, or coat of arms, an ape sitting on a lobster, and viewing itself in a mirror, was no bad emblem of its mock consequence.

They who reprobated the government of Berne on account of its progressive tendency towards an oligarchy, grounded their chief ar-

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guments on the absolute exclusion of the bulk of the people from all honourable and lucrative employments; and the additional-reproach that, even among the privileged inhabitants of Berne, not one-third of the families were allowed to sit in the councils, or to aspire to any of the higher offices of magistracy.²⁵ This, though in fact it produced no pernicious consequences, must certainly be admitted to have been a glaring inconsistency in a government that boasted of a peculiar degree of liberty: and it might perhaps, without much danger, have been remedied, in order to gratify the correct notions of refined theorists. It is by no means our object to scrutinize, much less to vindicate the practice: but a few observations on its origin will not surely be deemed foreign to the present purpose, especially as they will lead us to a

The population of Berne, according to Mr. Coxe, amounted, in 1776, to eleven thousand souls; whence, upon an average of six individuals to a family, there must have been upwards of one thousand eight hundred families in the city. According to Busching, there were, in the year 1764, only two hundred and seventy-four patrician families admissible into the council; and even among these, which were gradually diminishing, not above one hundred were of the number out of which the vacancies were usually supplied. This partial pre-eminence, though justifiable upon principles of strict justice, was yet highly impolitic, and actually contributed gradually to the overthrow of the republic.

contemplation

contemplation of the manner in which the territorial possessions of the canton were administered, with a monarchical indeed, but, at the same time, confessedly with a most lenient sway.

The republic of Berne consisted originally of only four parishes, to which were soon added the districts which, under the name of the four interior jurisdictions or bailiwicks, have till lately been administered by the four bannerets. The German division, including the collegiate of Berne, whose revenues, since the Reformation, were administered by a bailiff; and the government of Aigle, which, though its inhabitants use the French language, was yet annexed to this district, contained thirty-eight, and the French department twelve bailiwicks.²⁶

²⁶ The above enumeration is according to Busching. Durrant, in his *Statistique de la Suisse*, vol. ii. distributes them as follows :

The four interior Jurisdictions	-	-	4
The district of Berne, including the collegiate			6
The district of Bienné	-	-	6
The Argau	-	-	10
The Emmenthal	-	-	7
The Oberland	-	-	8
The Pays de Vaud, including Aigle	-		13

Total 54

To these might be added the French bailiwicks, Granson, Orbe, Echallens, and Morat, which were called *Mediate*,
and

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They had, for the most part, been originally secular jurisdictions; but twelve of the number had been monasteries, secularized at the Reformation, and their revenues were chiefly appropriated to the maintenance of the clergy, the schools, and to charitable uses. They were distributed into four classes, according to their revenues; the most profitable yielding from six to eight thousand, and the lowest less than two thousand crowns.²⁷ Those of the two first classes could be held only once; but those bailiffs, on whom chance bestowed the inferior lots, might, after an intermediate interval of six years, obtain a second, and even a third, of the lower orders. These offices were sexennial: being the most lucrative in the state, and for-

and were held in common by Berne and Friburg, each of which cantons appointed alternately to two of them. Meiners has given us a total of fifty-nine bailiwicks; but he has probably added some diplomatic offices, which were considered as equivalent to bailiwicks. The residency in London, abolished within these twenty years for economical reasons, was one of the number. How Stanyan came to mention seventy-two bailiwicks, we cannot account for. The whole territory of the canton contained thirty-nine towns, and one thousand three hundred villages and hamlets. Of the successive territorial acquisitions, a circumstantial account is given by Durand, t. iii. p. 183—194.

²⁷ Of the imperial dollars, which appear to be the crowns here mentioned, about six go to a pound sterling.

merly

merly bestowed, by open suffrages, in the council, they were canvassed with much eagerness, and often obtained by very undue expedients, among which, sumptuous entertainments were not always ineffectual. After frequent partialities and unfairness in these elections had raised considerable clamour against the whole magistracy, which was never entirely effaced, the great council, at the beginning of the present century,²⁸ thought it advisable to introduce the elections by lot. From that time many abuses, and among the rest the convivial intemperance which had been generally imputed to the Swiss, was observed sensibly to diminish: and even Stanyan, who has freely bestowed his censure upon the government of Berne, acknowledges that this new mode of appointment had been productive of very salutary effects. In the elections, the preference was given to the senior counsellors, so that those of a recent date could not enter in competition with those of a former promotion; and if only one counsellor, of a particular year, offered as candidate, he succeeded without any formality or opposition.

If we reflect that the territories thus governed by these delegates had in fact been honourably acquired by their ancestors, either by con-

²⁸ Anna 1718.

quest

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quest or purchase, we shall see less cause to censure those patricians for being tenacious of a property to which they had so fair a title; and it will be an additional extenuation of this unequal distribution of power, that none of those territories were, on falling into the hands of these families, deprived of a single franchise or prerogative held before this transfer; scarcely one of them being known, which had not retained some peculiar, and often very important privileges.²⁹ To this must be added that, according to the positive testimony of the most unprejudiced observers, these bailiffs, against whom so much clamour had been raised by the envious and ungovernable, so far from exercising in its full extent the powers delegated to them, were, for the most part, studious to soften the rigour of the laws: that they often mitigated the fines they had a right to impose, and frequently allotted the portion that was their due to charitable uses: that whoever thought himself aggrieved by a decree, had an immediate remedy by an appeal to the chambers instituted for that purpose, and in the German district,

²⁹ Even the conquered towns of Bruck, Lenzburg, Arau, and Zoffingen, preserved their own magistracy, and ample privileges, from which they derived the name of the *free towns*. Lausanne retained its three councils, and both the higher and lower jurisdictions.

ultimately

ultimately to the sovereign council : and that the appellant was sure to obtain speedy redress, it being proverbial at Berne, that a peasant unless he were known to be uncommonly litigious, seldom failed to succeed against his bailiff. In a word, it is well attested, that a zealous emulation prevailed among the ruling families, which of them should deserve the reputation of most lenity and moderation, in the administration of the provinces : ‘ and was it then so reprehensible,’ says a candid and intelligent writer, who seems to have reflected maturely on the subject,²⁰ ‘ was it so flagrant a practice in the representatives of the illustrious patriots, who had, by their valour and industry, or by ample contributions out of their private fortunes, rescued large districts, either from the oppressions of tyranny, or the ravages of the boisterous elements, to retain the property their ancestors had acquired by such honourable means, and to preserve the right of providing for the happiness of a people, than which none upon earth could boast of greater comforts, or was, in fact, more conscious of its prosperity ?’

So far from the rulers attempting to disguise, or palliate the defects which adhered to their

²⁰ Meiner's Letters, vol. i p. 276.

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(1681.)

government, we meet with an instance, so rare in history, of the people being called upon to point out whatever might appear to them capable of amendment. This instance occurred, when, in one of his splendid campaigns, Lewis the Fourteenth, having taken possession of Strasburg, threatened all the neighbouring countries with the impression of his arms; and when the council of Berne, dreading the approaching storm, and aware that their best security against foreign attack was the love and confidence of the people, demanded such animadversions, and actually received and examined all that were transmitted to them. The grievances, as might be expected, were numerous, and among these it may be imagined, that the tendency towards oligarchy, by the progressive decrease of the senatorial families, was not considered as one of the most trivial. Many zealous, but discreet patriots, it must be owned, have admitted this to be an essential blemish, which the magistrates wanted either courage or virtue to remedy;³¹ for though some families of the Pays de Vaud were occasionally received into the burghership of Berne, and, at every election into the great council, a few were generally admitted who had no family claim to

³¹ The celebrated Haller proposed a plan for removing this cause of complaint; but it was not carried into execution.

the

the promotion, yet this remedy seemed by no means adequate to the evil : and men of much sagacity have foretold that this deformity would in time destroy the equilibrium and mutual control, on which, in their opinion, depended the permanency of the republic.

The large sums accumulated by most of the great families, which, under the name of *family chests*, were appropriated to the relief of those of their kindred, who, either from misconduct or reverses of fortune, had been reduced to want ; the funds possessed for the same purpose by the tribes ; and the ample revenues enjoyed by the burghers of many of the municipal towns, arising from the rents or produce of lands held by them in common, and from time to time shared among them, were likewise censured by many, as affording encouragement to a relaxation of morals as well as industry, and hence highly prejudicial to a state, the very essence of which consisted in energy and frugality. The former of these institutions however will be found less exceptionable, if we consider how essential it must have been, in a government like this, to prevent persons in needy circumstances from succeeding to the higher offices in the administration ; and that moreover, in order to prevent an accumulation which, by impeding the circulation, might

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prove detrimental to the state, it had been enacted that none of these funds should ever exceed the sum of one hundred thousand French livres: and as to the municipal revenues, admitting them to be in some respects of a pernicious tendency, it was no doubt considered, that every encroachment or restraint upon property, would have been a much greater political injury, than occasional misapplications, of which undoubtedly too many instances could be adduced.

The increasing depravity of manners was perhaps the most serious of the evils complained of on this occasion: and indeed, how could it be expected that the contagion of French, and especially Parisian immorality, to which the flower of the young Patricians of Berne were incessantly exposed in their military career in that country, should not have relaxed their principles; and that, their stations being conspicuous in their own city, their example should not have propagated their levity and vicious propensities to the other classes, especially to the females, those great preservers of the morals of a people, but whose gentle natures are ill calculated to resist the seductions of insinuating libertines, who laugh modesty to scorn, and triumph in the seduction, which in the end leads to general depravity. This dereliction

reliction of moral, and hence ultimately of political virtue, not so much among the inferior classes, who still in some measure retained their primitive simplicity, as throughout the higher ranks, whose degeneracy affected the very vitals of government, we shall have to enumerate among the principal causes which have facilitated the fatal blow that put an end to the confederacy.

Of the state of the finances of Berne, as well Finances. as of the other Helvetic governments, no accurate, or any ways satisfactory account, can well be gathered from the various writers who have vaguely treated on the subject; the detail of them being, perhaps designedly, involved in a degree of obscurity, which, to prevent cavils, may be salutary, when an opinion of the integrity of the administration is firmly established. Thus, though it was well known that Berne, and indeed most of the cantons, possessed ample funds, from the gradual accumulation of a revenue, small indeed, but still exceeding the regular expenditure; though all concerned in this department of government were bound to lay exact accounts of their transactions before superior officers, and ultimately before the sovereign council; yet no kind of statement was ever divulged of the particulars, or even of the general balances of those accounts; and the public

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public were, in fact, left to divine what might at any time have been the real state of the exchequer.

The principal branches of the revenue, the nature of which could not be kept from public notice, though their net produce was never accurately known, were: 1. The profits of the demesnes, consisting chiefly of the church lands which had devolved to the state at the time of the Reformation, and to which, aware of the inexpediency of engrossing a large proportion of the landed property, the government have since made scarcely any additions: 2. The tithes, likewise sequestered at the Reformation, the produce of which was particularly appropriated to the maintenance of the clergy, the public seminaries, and of various charitable establishments; a considerable part of them having at the same time been ceded to private individuals, who perhaps had some antiquated right to claim them: 3. Certain quit-rents³² reserved to the state when lands were granted out to individuals for improvement; but the amount of which, being paid in coin, had gradually, by the depreciation of the currency, greatly diminished.³³ 4. A tax or fine, raised in the French dis-

³² *Censés foncieres.*

³³ The produce of the three preceding articles has, by Meiners, been estimated at about sixty-seven thousands crowns;

trict, on the alienation of landed property,³⁴ CHAP. VIII: no doubt severely felt, the amount being no less than one-sixth of the purchase money in noble, and one-tenth in base tenures: and which, though ever so moderate, would have been highly impolitic had this been a commercial country: 5. The monopoly of salt; at first sight a very exceptionable establishment, but in this country not so pernicious, since it provided for a constant supply, and at a moderate price, of this necessary article, of which, when the trade was left open, there often was a great scarcity, the price being always high, and at best, fluctuating: to this was also added the exclusive sale of gunpowder, the quality of this article being essential towards the security of individuals: 6. The produce of the post, which was farmed out at sixty thousand livres: 7. The customs, tolls, and duties on merchandise, the net produce of which has been estimated at five-and-twenty thousand crowns: 8. A duty on the wine imported into the city:³⁵ 9. The fines imposed for misdemeanors: and 10. Small retributions for the right of inhabitancy at Berne, for naturalization, and certain fees in juridical proceedings.

Although, without the expences of a court and of a standing army, and considering the

³⁴ *Le Lod; laudemium.*

³⁵ *Ohmgett.*

scantiness

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scantiness of the stipends allowed to the members of the magistracy (the total of which was said not to exceed twenty thousand crowns) it should seem that the government of Berne might, out of the aggregate of the above revenue, not only have amply provided for all incidental and necessary charges, but also have accumulated considerable savings: yet those who have witnessed the munificence of that government in their public establishments, for the security and convenience of their people; the many public edifices it entertained for the relief of the poor, the aged, and the infirm, and for restraining vice; the erecting and continual repairs of churches, of bridges, and roads, through the most craggy and inhospitable regions;³⁶ but above all the very liberal supplies that were granted to those who suffered from fire, inundations, the fall of impending rocks, the torrents of snow from the mountains which in an instant laid waste large populous tracts, and many other convulsions of nature to which this rugged country is incessantly exposed; those candid observers have frankly acknowledged, that the sources of revenue above specified could by no means be adequate to the

³⁶ The road from the Oberland down to Leuk in the Valais, is the admiration of all travellers, and must have cost large sums of money.

expences

expences which must be incurred, in order to keep the country in the state of prosperity at which it had lately arrived.

Thanks to the frugality of former generations, at times when fewer objects of convenience were deemed requisite, considerable capitals had been accumulated, the greatest part of which, having been placed in various productive funds, have within this century not only supplied ample means for defraying all the expences of the state, but also prevented the necessity of ever having recourse to loans or extraordinary contributions: and besides these ample capitals, we have the authority not only of general report, but also of the late iniquitous invaders, whose main object, in their unmerited attack, was manifestly the plunder of the treasures they stood in need of in order to carry on further depredations,³⁷ that the government of Berne had long retained in its coffers a large capital, in specie, which enabled them at all times to afford relief to the distressed, or to answer any extraordinary demand either for foreign negotiation, or, if unavoidable, for pre-

³⁷ The coincidence of dates amply justifies the surmise, and the French have in fact acknowledged it, that one of their chief objects in invading Switzerland, was the extorting the means of carrying on the Egyptian expedition. Thus they plundered their best friends, that they might be enabled to annoy one of their oldest allies.

paration

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VII.

paration against foreign attack. This capital was deemed a sacred trust; nor was it ever accessible but with the concurrence of the avoyer in office, the two treasurers, the four banmerets, and the senior of the two secret senators, who had each a different key of the vault in which it was deposited. Nor were these authorized ever to open this vault without a special order of the sovereign council.³⁸

Ecclesiastical
Establishment.

The administration of ecclesiastical affairs was committed to the supreme consistory at Berne, composed of a senator who presided, the dean and one of the ministers of Berne, and six members of the great council. The whole canton was divided into thirteen chapters

³⁸ The particulars we have been able to collect concerning the receipts and issues of the government of Berne, are so vague, that we can only venture to give a few of them in a note, for which we do not demand implicit confidence. Stanyan; a century ago, rated the whole income of the canton at 300,000 crowns: Busching asserts, that in 1764, the capital of the canton, in the English funds, amounted to 460,000*l.*; that it had lent the Elector of Saxony 860,000 livres, and large sums to Sardinia, Denmark, Austria, and Wirtemberg; insomuch that, in 1770, the whole of its property in foreign funds, amounted to at least 19,000,000 of livres. According to the same author, the treasure at Berne in 1764, was not short of 9,000,000 of livres. Durand rated it no higher than 2,300,000 crowns. What sum the French have carried off is not sufficiently ascertained to be produced in evidence.

or

or dioceses; eight in the German and five in the French district; and into four hundred and sixteen parishes, to each of which was appointed a pastor, and to some of the larger an additional vicar or curate. These livings were distinguished into three classes, according to the stipends annexed to them.³⁹ In the German district, the older clergy succeeded to the more lucrative benefices by seniority; a practice that has been much censured, since in consequence of it, inferior abilities often obtained promotion; and many of the incumbents, being once in the line of succession, would lay their heads on the soft pillow of indolence, having no incentive for more than common exertions. The vacancies in the lower classes, a few livings excepted which had their peculiar patrons, were filled by the senate; and here the prevalence of personal favour was often complained of. Besides the supreme consistory, an ecclesiastical court was established at Berne, consisting of the dean and the nine pastors of the city, and five professors, who superintended the discipline of the church: the avoyer out of office had a right to

³⁹ The largest appointments were from one hundred and fifty to three hundred pounds sterling, and of these there were not above twenty. The middle class had between one hundred and fifty and seventy pounds. In the French they were, in general, smaller than in the German district.

preside

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VIII

preside at this court. The Pays de Vaud had likewise a court which exercised a censorial power, and an assembly that nominated to the vacancies. Each chapter, or diocese, had a dean appointed by the senate, who, together with a chamberlain, and a certain number of jurats or visitors, directed the clerical concerns of their districts, and reported their proceedings to the supreme consistory: and each town, or parish, had its peculiar consistory, which took cognizance of every offence against religion and morality. Every pastor was enjoined to keep registers, and report to his superiors all that related to the population, and principal concerns of his district,

The clergy, in this as well as in other parts of Switzerland, were held in high veneration. At Berne the dean, the first ecclesiastic of the state, ranked before the counsellors: a rural dean was equal to the bailiff: and in each town or parish, the minister had precedence before all the municipal officers: but this pre-eminence was all the political consequence they could boast, since, as we have already seen, only two ecclesiastics were admitted into the supreme consistory at Berne, the seven other members being laymen; and the patronage in the German district centred chiefly in the senate, while in the Pays de Vaud all ecclesiastical meetings

meetings were held under the immediate inspection of the bailiff. In order moreover to exclude the clergy as much as possible, from all interference in political affairs, it had been decreed that no one in orders should be eligible either into the senate, council, or any other civil department; and that the ordination should confer so indelible a character, that no one by resigning his preferment should thereby become qualified to hold any secular employment.⁴⁰

A useful establishment, perhaps not unworthy of imitation, was the ecclesiastical fund which accrued from certain regulated, but very moderate, contributions of the more opulent incumbents, which was from time to time appropriated to the increase of the smaller livings. What a progressive fund of this nature would in time have been produced, had not every salutary institution been subverted, may easily be conceived: and as the object of its institution must, after a certain period, have been sufficiently answered, it was intimated that the future accumulation would have been appropriated to the repairs and embellishment of churches, the building of organs, of which there were not many in the canton, and other improvements

⁴⁰ They were not so strict at Zurich; any ecclesiastic who quitted his preferment being there allowed to enter into the political career.

that

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VIII.Military
Establish-
ments.

that might contribute to the edification of those disposed to practise the duties of religion.

Considering that this country never entertained any standing army, and that it had during some centuries experienced no war of any magnitude, it can hardly be expected that its military establishment should have kept pace with the great improvements that have been made by all the neighbouring powers. Its force consisted of a militia, imperfectly trained, and in which native valour alone could in some measure compensate for the want of that mechanical expertness, to which modern tactics have been of late in a great measure reduced. Every man, between the ages of sixteen and sixty, was enrolled, and liable to be called out to service; and each of them was to supply himself with an uniform, arms, and accoutrements.⁴¹ Out of these, a body of forty thousand men were selected, and formed into twenty-one regiments of infantry, one-sixth grenadiers, another sixth musketeers, and the two other thirds fusiliers, which latter were never called out but upon extraordinary emergencies, and from these the two preceding chosen bands were occasionally recruited. Four companies of chasseurs, or riflemen, were added and trained for

⁴¹ No one was licensed to marry unless he produced his complete military equipment.

the

the more arduous services in woods, among rocks, and in narrow defiles. The cavalry of the canton consisted of eighteen squadrons of dragoons, and one company raised in the neighbourhood of Buren: as each man found his own horse, none but persons of some property entered into this service. A body of cuirassiers, some hundreds in number, was maintained by the great vassals, who supplied them with arms and horses. Four companies of artillery were trained with far greater precision than the rest of the militia: lastly, there was a city guard of three hundred and sixty men, one-third of which resided at Berne, and the rest in the vicinity: and these, with one hundred and three men, who formed the garrison of Aargurg, were the only soldiers who could be properly denominated regulars. These troops were all officered, and at stated times drawn out to be reviewed; and their muster was regularly reported to the council of war, and ultimately to the sovereign council. The arsenal of Berne was well known to be richly supplied with a numerous artillery, and a great store of small arms; besides which, every seat of a bailiff contained an armoury, which, in case of an emergency, might have added to the defence of the district.

Imperfect as the discipline of this militia appears

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appears to have been, it would inevitably have been still more defective, had it not been for the foreign services, in which not only the privates, but much more the officers were rendered very expert in the use of arms and military evolutions; the Swiss regiments having in general been considered as the best trained, and in fact, the flower of the armies in which they were engaged. This argument has been frequently adduced in favour of those services: but on the other hand, they have been as often reprobated on the score of the depopulation they were supposed to occasion, of the sums they drew out of the country, few of the men, and none of the officers, of late living upon their pay, and above all, the depravity they introduced into their towns, and in some measure also among the country-people. Upon duly weighing the grounds on both sides of the question, it appears manifest that the practice upon the whole was pernicious; and that had the rulers of Berne not been biassed by secret, and perhaps pecuniary motives, they would seriously have deliberated on the means of removing this evil.

Having given a general view of the government of Berne, we may pass rapidly over those of Lucern, Friburg, and Soleure, as they differed but little from the former, except in the numbers of their councils and senates, and in some

some respects in the mode of election; but in nothing that materially affected the principles of their political economy. Lucern was go-
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Lucern.
 vernaed by a senate of thirty-six, and a council of sixty-four members, forming together a legislative body of one hundred, chiefly, though not exclusively, nobles, some plebeian burghers being admitted at every election. This body filled up its own vacancies by open suffrages; and the senate chose likewise its own members. A seat in the senate raised a plebeian and his family to the patrician rank, which was acknowledged as a title of nobility even by the scrupulous order of Malta. The greatest peculiarity in this aristocratical government was, that all questions relating to peace, war, and alliances, were referred to the burghers at large.

At Friburg the burghers elected the avoy-
Friburg.
 ers, the chancellor, the town clerk, the burgo-master or president of the law court, and the chief parochial priest. The legislative body consisted of two hundred senators and counsellors, chosen by themselves out of seventy-one patrician families. The senate consisted of twenty-four members, and sixty of the great council constituted a committee, partly for elections, but chiefly for the dispatch of matters that required secrecy. Most of the elections

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were left to the absolute decision of hazard: a box, containing a number of compartments equal to that of the candidates, being presented to each of the electors, who threw in his ball without knowing for whom he voted. The advantages attending this chance mode, which was justly called the *blind ballot*, considering the limited number of persons eligible into the offices, were no doubt more specious than real.

Soleure.

At Soleure the sovereign council consisted of one hundred and one members, of which number, thirty-five constituted the senate. All these, as well as the two avoyers, the bannerets, treasurers, and tribunes, were chosen by the council, out of the body of citizens, whose number did not exceed four hundred.

3. Aristo-
democratic
Cantons.

In the three aristo-democratic cantons, the essential difference was that the members, both of senate and council, were chosen from among the burghers at large, in their respective tribes; and that every burgher was not only eligible, but that the lowest among them have actually at times succeeded to the highest offices.

Zuric.

The senate and council of Zuric consisted jointly of two hundred and twelve members, of whom fifty were senators. The whole burgher-ship was divided into thirteen tribes; one of which, containing the nobles, and those who exercised none of the professions of the other tribes,

tribes; was distinguished by the name of the Constables, and had some peculiar prerogatives.

The senate consisted of the two burgomasters, who presided alternately every six months; four stadholders or chief tribunes, being the lieutenants of the burgomasters; two treasurers, and the obman or administrator of the secularized church lands; six members chosen by the constables, three out of each of the other tribes, and six elected promiscuously out of any of the tribes. For the great council eighteen members were returned by the constables, and twelve by each of the other tribes; so that the whole legislative body consisted of two hundred and twelve members. The vacancies were immediately filled up; and the great offices were all at the nomination of the senate and council.

Basle had no nobility.⁴³ The burghers were Basle. incorporated into eighteen tribes; three of which, belonging to little Basle, were blended into the fifteen of the great town in the elections of senators; but retained their separate votes in the nomination of counsellors. Four from each of the fifteen tribes of the great

⁴³ In 1445 the Basilians, being incensed against their nobles, who in the preceding war had sided with France, banished many of them out of the city; those only who renounced all distinctions of nobility being suffered to remain.

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town, together with the two burgomasters, and two great tribunes, formed the senate : and these, added to twelve from each of the eighteen tribes, composed the council, which thus consisted of two hundred and eighty members. So far from the citizens at large being allowed to share in these elections, only those who had already seats in the council had the right of voting, whenever a vacancy was to be filled up out of their particular tribe. These elections, however, were not decisive, three in some cases, and in others six being chosen, among whom, one was selected by lot. Chance was also made to determine in the election of bailiffs, of the clergy, and what has often afforded matter for ridicule, of the professors in the university.*

Shaffhausen.
sen.

Twelve tribes, or abbeys, elected the senate and council of Shaffhausen, two members each for the former, and five for the latter of these bodies; and these, together with the burgomasters, formed the supreme legislature. The vacancies were filled immediately by the free suffrages of all the members of the tribes. The two burgomasters, the stadholder or proconsul, and the two treasurers, were appointed by the plurality of voices in the council.

* The celebrated mathematician John Bernouilli, drew the lot of professor of rhetoric, which it was some time before he had an opportunity of exchanging for the mathematical chair,

The

The governments of the six remaining cantons being purely democratical, it will be practicable to form a just idea of the spirit and operation of them, without nicely discriminating the shades that constituted some differences betwixt them. The sovereign authority in all of them resided with the people at large. At Uri, for instance, the people met on stated days, Uri generally once a year, in an open field, about four thousand in number. At these assemblies, which were called the communities of the country,⁴⁵ each male, of the age of sixteen, had his suffrage. They were opened by solemn prayers, and oaths of fidelity and allegiance. The people next proceeded either to confirm the old, or to elect new magistrates, consisting of the landamman, who was generally continued a second year in office, the stadholder, the treasurer, and the secretary. They elected deputies to the general diets, or for foreign missions; named the bailiffs in their turns, most of the cantons having subject provinces in common with others; and deliberated on all matters of more than common importance. For the dispatch of the ordinary business, a council of regency⁴⁶ was named; each community, of which there were ten, electing six counsellors.

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3. Democratic Cantons.

⁴⁵ *Lands-gemeind.*

⁴⁶ *Land-rath.*

The

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VIII.

The landamman, who presided at this board, and in some cases each counsellor, had the right of calling in additional members whenever he saw occasion. Each community, each parish, each village, had its own independent jurisdiction; it conducted its own pecuniary concerns, its revenue from lands, woods, and alps; and chose its secular clergy. These primary communities met at least once a month.

Schwitz.

Schwitz consisted of six communities, each of which returned ten members to the council of regency. The *street court*, an institution that savours much of patriarchal simplicity, was peculiar to this canton. The lieutenant of police,⁴⁷ on receiving a complaint, called together seven of the first competent persons he met with in his way, who having heard both parties, immediately declared their opinion concerning the dispute. Its jurisdiction did not extend beyond a debt of fifty florins, England, with reason, prides itself in its trials by jury; but it cannot boast of having been the only inventor of that salutary institution.

Under-
walden.

Underwalden consisted of two grand divisions, the one above, and the other below the Kern wood; each consisting of six communities or parishes; but the former having the

⁴⁷ *Gross Weibel*, or Grand Sautier.

preponderancy

preponderancy before the latter, in the proportion of two to one, in all business of finance, elections of deputies and bailiffs, and other matters that concerned the whole canton. Zug, the least of the cantons, consisting of only five communities, two municipal and three rural ones, had a more complicated government than any of the democratic states. It had its general assembly held in a public place at Zug, into which no ecclesiastic was admitted; but this interfered no further than in the elections of the chief magistrates: all other concerns were debated in the separate communities, and the majority of their decisions was conclusive. The council of regency, held in the town, possessed the executive power.

The government of the canton of Glaris, Glaris, which consisted of fifteen communities, called *Tagwen*, differed so little from the other democratic cantons, that were it not for the mixture of religions, which required some peculiar regulations, it would have sufficed merely to name it in the list. The chief magistrates were taken alternately from the two religions; but the protestant landamman remained three, and the catholic only two years in office. This chief magistrate, and his lieutenant the stadholder, were always of different religions. The council of regency consisted of forty-eight protestant,

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testant, and fifteen catholic members. All the other magistrates alternated ; and the times of their continuing in office were nearly in the same proportion. Each communion had its particular court of justice ; but when the parties were of different religions, it was decreed that the assessor, who might have the casting vote, should be of the same religion as the defendant : each religion had moreover its particular assembly, its treasury, and arsenal. Of the subject districts, the protestants had retained the county of Werdenberg, and the catholics the Gaster and Uznach, each being of the religion of the sovereign. This simple people may have been at times deceived in some of the means they adopted for securing tranquillity and equal justice to all parties ; but equity appears manifestly to have been the principal, if not the sole, motive in their political institutions.

Appenzel

Of Appenzel, little requires to be said, but that being likewise of two religions, they who professed them had resolved to separate into different districts ; the nine interior communities, called the *inner Rhodes*, being catholic, and the *exterior Rhodes*, consisting of twenty parishes, professing the protestant religion. Each district had its general assembly, its council of regency, its treasury, and police : but though each sent a deputy to the Helvetic diet, they

they had jointly only one vote ; and this they forfeited if they happened to differ in opinion.

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4. Allies.
The Grison
Country.

Among the allied states, the government of the Grison country deserves some particular notice; as it will be vain to seek in history, or in the politics of our own times, a form so purely democratic in its theory, and yet so remote from it in the application. The three leagues were divided into twenty-six higher jurisdictions, and subdivided into fifty-nine communities, many of them consisting of a single village, each of which being a distinct, though very diminutive republic, had its peculiar and independent constitution, chose its own civil magistrates, consisting in general of an amman, podesta or ministrat, and twelve jurats, its pastors, and deputies, to the general diet. All these it had the power to cashier, and in case of delinquency, to punish, without admitting the least interference of the collective body, unless by way of intercession. In these elections, and in all public deliberations, every male of a stated age had his vote.⁴⁸

The link of union among these petty states was the general diet to which each community sent one, and four of the larger ones two deputies. These, together with the chiefs of each

⁴⁸ This age, in some communities, was so early as the fourteenth year.

league,

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league, formed a body of sixty-six members, who met in rotation at Coire, Davos, and Jlanz, about the beginning of September, and continued sitting about three weeks or a month. It is to be observed, that these deputies were not authorized to decide on any question, but that they were bound in every instance to send to their constituents a statement of the matter in agitation, and to demand special instructions, to which they were bound to adhere. Each community might however at all times waive this privilege, by investing its deputy with a general power to act according to his own discretion: and as by far the majority of the electors were persons wholly unqualified to judge upon complicated matters of government, it may well be imagined that every society of this nature would frequently be biassed by a few of its members, superior to the rest either in mental qualifications, or the still more prevalent influence of property. Hence many of these unlimited powers were obtained; and even when they were withheld, it was generally in the power of the leaders, by some ambiguity or peculiarity in the statement laid before the communities, to obtain the decision that best suited their purposes. There was no established board or council, which could be considered as an executive body.

This

This will suffice to point out to the reader the principal source of the undue influence which at once defaced the most prominent feature of this popular constitution. An influence which men will in vain endeavour to counteract: and which, when the interests or passions of the leaders happen to be at variance will ever open the door to factions and civil commotions, the horrors of which that country has abundantly experienced.⁴⁸ Mr. Coxe's judicious observations on the incompetency of annual elections by the people at large, towards securing the freedom of a state, are well worth the serious consideration of every Englishman, who has the prosperity of his country truly at heart.⁴⁹

In the Valais also, six of the communities The Valais. (which were called *Dizains*, the whole state being divided into ten districts) were strictly democratical and independent, each having its own civil as well as criminal jurisdiction, being governed by its own laws and customs, and sending deputies to a general diet, who were bound to conform themselves to the instructions given them by their constituents. In criminal matters however, an appeal lay to the general diet, where the bishop presided, and exerted a considerable degree of influence.

⁴⁸ Particularly in the war of Valteline. See vol. iii. p. 22. seq.

⁴⁹ See Coxe's Travels in Switzerland, t. iii. p. 230. seq.

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The dizain of Sion, which was governed by a burgomaster and a council of twenty-four members, may be classed among the aristocratical communities. The three remaining dizains were subject to the diet, which consisted of only nine votes, the bishop, the captain-general,⁵⁰ and the deputations of the seven sovereign dizains, each having a single suffrage, though they generally sent four, and when they pleased, a still greater number of delegates.

Of the fluctuating government of Geneva we shall have occasion to speak at large in the next Chapter: nor shall we enter here into any further particulars concerning the constitutions of the allied bishopric of Basle, the principality of Neuchattel, the abbey and city of St. Gallen Mulhausen, Bienne, Gersau, and Engelberg, some of which exhibit a mixture of governments, the unravelling of which would require more space, than is intended to be here allotted to these subjects; especially as they offer no particular circumstance or observation which may tend to illustrate the spirit and genius of this heterogeneous commonwealth.

Helvetic
Diets.

Having thus taken a cursory view of the several component parts, the aggregate of which formed the Helvetic confederacy, we may now proceed to contemplate the bond of union, to

⁵¹ *Lands-hauptman.*

which they chiefly owed the rank they have long held among the powers of Europe ; but which, as has been observed by a writer of much authority,⁵¹ was improperly called an union, since, except in what concerned the common sovereignties, there were but few points in which they necessarily came in contact with each other. Its true denomination appears to have been that of a permanent defensive alliance, the object of which was the protection of each member against all foreign attacks, and the preservation of interior tranquillity, by the weighty preponderancy of a majority operating against those who betrayed a disposition to create disturbances. Though an elective, it was however by no means a representative government : it had no common administration, no concentrated authority, no executive power, no public treasury, no mint : nor could it, even in its relations with foreign powers, be considered as an individual state, since most of the alliances were made not with the collective body at large, but one or more of the members separately, several of them having expressly reserved the power of forming such connections.⁵²

⁵¹ Dict. de la Suisse : Discours preliminaire.

⁵² The Germanic body, and the seven united provinces, were likewise aggregates of independent states ; but they differed widely from the Helvetic confederacy, having each
a collective

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1712.

The diets, which thus appear to have been held more for the purpose of communication, than either of legislation, or any other functions of government, were either general or special, ordinary or extraordinary. The general ordinary diets consisted of the deputies of all the cantons, and of those of the allies who were distinguished by the appellation of associates. They for a long time met annually in the month of July at Baden; till, after the five old catholic cantons had been excluded from the co-sovereignty of that country, their deputies were spared the mortification of assembling at a place where they had once held a marked pre-eminence; and the meetings were transferred to Frauenfeld, a town which, though situated in the province of Thurgau, subject to the eight ancient cantons, could yet boast of prerogatives which bordered nearly upon independence.⁵³

a collective sovereign, the one an emperor and a diet, and the other a stadholder and states-general.

⁵³ This town, when it was, in 1460, taken by the Swiss from the house of Austria, not only retained all its privileges, but even obtained such additional prerogatives as almost amounted to absolute sovereignty. It had its great and little councils, its avoyers, all chosen within itself, and both the high and low jurisdictions. The only badges of dependence were, that the Landamman of Thurgau presided at its criminal court, and that there lay an appeal from the little council to the great diet.

The

The canton of Zurich, which had the priority of rank, the custody of the common seal and archives, and the direction of the chancery, had the right to summon the general diets, and in extraordinary cases, to fix the time and place of meeting. In partial assemblies, in which Zurich had no concern, the senior of the cantons, who were convened, was authorized to perform this office. To the general assemblies, each canton sent two deputies. The meetings were opened by formal speeches from the chief deputy of each canton; those of Underwalden, Glaris, and Appenzel, who represented each a separate district, having all of them the right of delivering a complimentary harangue.

The presiding deputy, after this, proposed all matters to be discussed, beginning with those that immediately concerned the interests of the collective body, and the execution of the laws; referring in general to the *priests ordnance* for ecclesiastical affairs, to the *convention of Sem-pach* for what related to military concerns, to the *union of Stanz* for the harmony to be preserved between the different members of the confederacy; and to the *peace of Arau* for any question that might arise concerning the common bailiwicks. They next examined into the causes brought before them by appeal. Audiences were then given to foreign ministers, who,

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who, whenever they saw cause, were allowed to summon extraordinary diets; in which case however, they were required to defray all the expences attending them. The bailiff of the place where the diet met, called upon the members successively for their opinions: and in case of an equality of suffrages, which rarely happened, he had a casting vote. Questions of a general import, and of any magnitude, were not ultimately decided, but references were made to the different cantons; and those of superior moment, or of a partial nature, were frequently referred to a special, or to a subsequent ordinary meeting.

After this, the deputies who had no share in the common bailiwicks,⁵⁴ made each another complimentary discourse and withdrew. The bailiffs hereupon reported concerning the affairs of the different districts, gave in their accounts, and stated particularly the sentences they had pronounced, and the fines they had imposed. All this was carefully investigated; and the awards, if complained of, were either confirmed or repealed. The conduct of every subordinate magistrate was scrutinized, if not always with real, at least with apparent severity; and where any delinquency appeared,

⁵⁴ Thurgau, Rheintal, Sargans, and the upper free bailiwicks, subject only to the eight ancient cantons.

censured,

censured, perhaps not always with due severity: and here terminated the functions of a general diet.

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Among the special diets, those of the two religions were the most frequent and important. The deputies of the protestant cantons usually assembled at Arau, and those of the catholic at Lucern. Even at the general diets at Frauenfeld they often held separate sessions, when affairs of religion were brought into debate. A deputy from each of twelve out of the cantons,⁵⁵ met annually, in the month of August, at Lugano or Locarno, and enquired into the conduct of the bailiffs of the Italian provinces: and special commissions of the same nature were moreover, at stated times, appointed by all the co-regents, to examine into the proceedings of their delegates in the bailiwicks, which readily received, and were empowered to redress, the complaints of those who felt themselves aggrieved. These sessions of controul were known by the name of *Syndicatures*.

The law of arbitration, of which frequent mention has been made, was the result of most of the compacts that had been entered into by

⁵ Appenzel had no share in the Italian bailiwicks, they having been acquired before this canton was admitted into a confederacy.

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these states ; and gave rise to many secondary meetings, which were summoned for the purpose of adjusting disputes occasionally arising between different members of the confederacy. Whenever these occurred, each canton at variance, sent two deputies to the place agreed upon in their treaties, and these, when their opinions were equally divided, chose a sur-arbitrator from one of the neutral cantons. This umpire was for the time absolved from his oath of allegiance to his own sovereign, that none of his engagements might clash with the impartiality of his award. He was not allowed to propose a new opinion, but could only confirm one of those previously delivered by the deputies ; but his decision was final. All the cantons were not equally bound to submit their differences to the law of arbitration, the old ones, except reciprocally among themselves, having reserved the power of declining it, while those that entered late in the confederacy were bound to adhere to it whenever it was proposed to them.

The provision known by the name of the *Defensional*,⁵⁶ had been made (though we do not find that it was often recurred to) for providing for the security of the state on sudden and very urgent emergencies, when the tardy proceedings of the diets might have been attended

⁵⁶ See vol. iii. p. 78.

with

with dangerous consequences. Deputies were on those occasions named by all the members of the Helvetic body, who were invested with full powers to direct the force of the nation, to be raised in the proportion specified in the above tables, in the manner that should to them seem most effectual. These deputies might truly have been stiled representatives, not of the particular cantons that had nominated them, but of the nation at large. The origin of this institution, like that of many others in this country, is not distinctly known; but its articles appear to have been particularly digested at the time of the peace of Westphalia, when the nation established its relative consequence in Europe by the acknowledgment of its absolute independence from the empire.

The most superficial observer will doubtless perceive that this constitution, admirably calculated for the security and domestic tranquillity of a peaceful, free-minded, unambitious people, scrupulously tenacious of every right however trivial, and aware, in their simplicity, of the dangers of innovation, would betray much debility and inertness, if put to the test of a vigorous attack from abroad; particularly at a time when, having themselves, through a long interval of peace, neglected the improvements made by other nations in the art of war, they

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could

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could oppose nothing but an undaunted courage to the refined system of tactics displayed by highly disciplined troops, and especially to the tremendous effects of a formidable artillery. Such an attack it might perhaps still have repelled, had the nation, availing itself of the natural strength of its country, co-operated with the same unanimity as it did when it defeated the attacks of Austria, Burgundy, and the nobles: but the want of combination in its measures as well as of its forces, of a centre of union, and we may add, of a power to compel the reluctant, has no doubt ultimately proved the chief cause of the fatal catastrophe we have lately witnessed. Should independence once more gladden these valleys, and exhilarate the shepherds of these craggy mountains, the wise and benevolent restorers of the free constitution that must be devised for them, will most assuredly advert to this circumstance; and provide some means to call forth the whole strength in case of an attack, which, like the late invasion, revolted indeed the bulk of the people, but could not concentrate the disjointed parts, nor rouse the trepidating rulers into a well-directed plan of vigorous resistance.

Alliances.

Although from the copiousness of the subject it has appeared improper to enter into any particulars concerning the alliances of the Helvetic states

states with different powers, yet this slight survey of their polity might justly be deemed materially defective, should no mention whatever be made of the several foreign connexions they entered into from the time they became a constituent part of the political system of Europe.

The house of Austria finding itself, after repeated attempts to subjugate this country, not only frustrated in its designs, but even exposed to the successful attacks of the irritated peasants, thought it expedient at length to convert into a peace of fifty years, the conditions of several previous truces, which the dukes never did, and probably never meant to observe. (1412.) New infractions, succeeded by fresh accommodations, still kept up an inveterate animosity between them, which at length yielded to the common hatred, fomented by the French king, against the rash and unfortunate Duke of Burgundy. Sigismund of Austria, willing to avail himself of the valour of the Swiss, the impression of whose arms his ancestors had so often experienced, concluded what was denominated a perpetual and hereditary union with the eight cantons and the city of Soleure, which was to relate only to the Austrian territories immediately bordering upon Swisserland. (1477.) This in fact was a defensive alliance, but so far from being perpetual, it was readily broken when the

CHAP. the Suabian league resolved to curb the inde-
 VII. pendent spirit of the confederates. Having

(1500.) failed in this attempt, the Austrian emperor, Maximilian the First, renewed the same compact with some of the cantons: and soon after, having succeeded to the dominions of Duke Sigismund, ratified it in a more solemn manner with the twelve cantons, and the city of St. Gallen; expressly including in the treaty his grandson, since eminent by the name of Charles the Fifth. This prince having inherited the county of Burgundy, his crafty grand-sire well knew that he would stand in great need, if not of the assistance, at least of the neutrality of this people, towards the tranquil possession of that province; nor was he blind to the importance of the Swiss in the wars he foresaw he should have to carry on in Italy.

(1557.) Philip the Second, King of Spain, as one of the representatives of the house of Austria, renewed this treaty nearly in the terms of the

(1467.) original compact. The capitulate of Milan, first entered into with Galeazzo Sforza, and since claimed by two French monarchs,⁵⁷ and incorporated into the alliances between Philip the Second and the catholic cantons, became, when that province was ceded to the dukes of

⁵⁷ Lewis the Twelfth, and Francis the First,

Austria,

Austria, an additional link between those princes and the Swiss cantons.

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The vicinity of the territories of Savoy, the many dissensions necessarily fomented by this contiguity, and the various complicated claims of each party, and of their several vassals, produced, as we have noticed in a former chapter, various struggles, which were terminated by treaties and conventions, rather resembling temporary cessations of hostilities, than real accommodations of differences. When after the Reformation, the catholic cantons conceived a jealousy of the rising power of those of the protestant persuasion, it became easy for the Duke of Savoy, who was bent upon recovering the luxuriant tracts in the Pays de Vaud (which Berne and Friburg had wrested from him, and which he never viewed from the opposite shores of the lake, without repining) to obtain an alliance with six of the catholic cantons: and this soon after led to a subsequent league, even with Berne, in which the canton agreed to a restitution of a part of those territories, on being confirmed in the possession of the remainder. These alliances, when Savoy was menaced by the Spanish arms, became a subsidiary treaty, or rather a capitulation for the supply of troops, of which some have ever since

(1560.)

(1564.)

CHAP. since been retained in the pay of the court of
VIII. Turin.

(1617.) The most extensive, intimate, and important alliance of the Helvetic states, was no doubt the league with the crown of France. We have already traced the origin of the predilection the French monarchs have ever entertained for the Swiss troops, up to the memorable combat in the cemetery of St. Jacob, near Basle. The heroic valour which a handful of Confederates there displayed, gave rise to the treaty
(1453.) between Charles the Seventh, which ten years after was ratified by Lewis the Eleventh, and has ever since subsisted, under various modifications, and with very few interruptions. The enumeration of all the conventions, capitulations, and treaties, between France and the cantons, would alone fill an ample volume. Whenever a breach of promise on the part of France caused a temporary intermission in these compacts, it generally cost the monarch more to appease the angry Swiss than if he had fulfilled his engagements. As if defeats were to rank among the trophies that signalized this people,
(1516.) the disastrous day of Marignan impressed Francis the First with so high a sense of the Helvetic valour, that, without loss of time, he renewed the alliance with the cantons, which he denominated

minated, and wished to be considered as *perpetual*. Each of his successors renewed the league; and Lewis the Fourteenth extended it not only to the thirteen cantons, but to all their allies and associates. After the war of Tockenbourg, in which the ties of union among the cantons themselves were rent asunder, and foreign alliances sunk into neglect, the French monarch offered a renewal of the league, with all the favourable stipulations it had ever comprised: but the protestant cantons, having taken umbrage at the interference of the French ambassador in favour of the catholics, and suspecting that some secret articles, detrimental to their own interests, had been inserted in a new treaty between that crown and the latter cantons, shewed a decided aversion to accept of any terms; nor was their reluctance wholly surmounted till long after that monarch's death. (1663.)

The temporary treaties with the pope, chiefly brought about by the turbulent Cardinal of Sion, soon yielded to the want of punctuality in the pontiff in fulfilling his engagements: and this breach of faith, in a character deemed so sacred, proved some time after a powerful argument in the hands of the reformers. A subsidiary treaty had, since the beginning of the last century, subsisted between the cantons of (1615.)

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of Berne and Zurich, and the republic of Venice, in which it was stipulated, that the troops granted by the cantons, were only to be employed in the defence of the territories of the republic on the terra firma : but of these services, if any were ever performed, no memorial has reached our notice.

Next to the French, the alliance of greatest consequence to the protestant cantons, was that with the Seven United Provinces, which had been first entered into jointly with England, when the Protector Cromwell concluded a
(1654.) peace with the States General ; and the Swiss protestants felt the ties of gratitude for the protection these two states had afforded them in their struggles subsequent to the Reformation. William the Third having ascended the British throne, became solicitous to engage
(1690.) Swiss troops in his service, and actually concluded a subsidiary treaty, of which England indeed has never availed itself, but which has ever since afforded to Holland a large body of men, to whom they entrusted the barrier that was long thought an important check to the grasping ambition of France, and whom the Dutch ever looked upon as the flower of their army. On settling the capitulation for these
(1712, and 1713.) troops, Berne and the Grison leagues added a clause, stipulating that England, at the desire

of Holland, should at any time be at liberty to claim a similar supply of troops, upon the same terms as had been agreed between them and the republic.

Spain and Naples have long entertained Swiss troops in their service; but the capitulations, by virtue of which they were authorized to raise them, have not come to our knowledge.⁵⁸ The well-informed writer of the preliminary discourse to the *Dictionnaire de la Suisse*, states, that the number of Swiss whom Lewis the Fourteenth retained in his service, amounted to twenty-eight thousand; but that of late the regiments in France did not contain more than fifteen thousand five hundred men. Taking therefore an average of one thousand three hundred men per regiment, the Swiss troops in foreign services formed an army of near forty thousand men. Besides these, the

⁵⁸ An account of the Swiss troops in foreign services, in the year 1780, for the accuracy of which however we do not pledge ourselves, contains the following number of regiments :

In France	-	-	-	-	-	12
Holland	-	-	-	-	-	6
Sardinia	-	-	-	-	-	4
Naples	-	-	-	-	-	4
Spain	-	-	-	-	-	4

Total 30

French

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French king, the king of Sardinia, and the Pope, had each a body of guards, to which they particularly committed the safety of their persons, known by the name of the *Cent Suisses*: and at this time, there probably is scarce an army in Europe, where numbers of Swiss adventurers, urged by their love of arms, are not enrolled.

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*Disturbances at Geneva in the eighteenth
Century.*

A RECENT historian, of considerable eminence, on mentioning the disturbances that have agitated the republic of Geneva within the present century, observes, perhaps with more truth than will be readily admitted by the victims of their patriotic ardor, ' that the revolutionary spirit, which has gone abroad in our days, and which has produced its most tremendous effects in a neighbouring kingdom, appears to have long since exhibited an inauspicious prelude in this unhappy city; in which the same principles, passions and energies; the same foibles, errors and delinquencies, which have produced the downfall of the French monarchy, have urged on both the ruling and the subordinate ranks, and impelled them to their ruin. The fatal coincidence of these destructive causes,' adds the same author, ' whenever it takes place in a devoted country, may well alarm each friend of political freedom, domestic tranquillity, and general civilization; and cause him to shudder at the
' impending

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‘ impending catastrophe.’¹ The people of Geneva, full of activity, ingenuity and perseverance, seem always to have been stimulated by an elastic impulse, which ill accorded with the narrow boundaries of their limited territory. Ever ambitious to act a conspicuous part on the theatre of Europe, as this could not be effected by their political consequence, they have courted celebrity not only by their improvements in sciences, arts, and manufactures, in which they have most deservedly acquired great eminence, but also by their political speculations, and refinements upon government: which, while they prompted them to struggle among themselves for the nice limits of authority, they little thought would in the end lead to the loss of wealth, independence, and religion, and finally to the very extinction of their ever fluctuating polity.

It seems to be the peculiar fate of republics, that when, by great unanimity and vigorous exertions, they have at length succeeded to repel and discourage the attacks of foreign enemies, the dæmon of discord invades the peaceful commonwealth, and prompts men of a restless spirit, and high ambition, to cavil at the authorities in which, perchance, no share has been al-

¹ Spittler's Sketch of the History of the European States, p. 35.

lotted

lotted to them; and these, should the rulers happen not to be endowed with sufficient prudence, wisdom and moderation, either to restrain seditious practices or to yield to their just demands, are sure to raise a clamour that will ever end in faction and domestic strife. Of such men there are numbers in every state: and as no government upon earth can be perfect, they will always find plausible pretences for arraigning either some institution, or the conduct of some envied or perhaps offending magistrate. In a well regulated monarchy, such men are long kept in awe by the vigour, the stability, and splendor of the throne: but in a republic, and especially in a small democracy where individuals maintain a familiar intercourse among themselves, no such fascinating influence commands the deference of the subordinate ranks, in favour of those who steer the helm. This no doubt is a trite observation; and yet the disregard of it has hurried many states into absolute destruction, and many societies and individuals into deplorable calamities: and to none perhaps does it apply more aptly than to the small and once flourishing republic of Geneva, which probably might still be happy, had the contending parties been wise enough to admit that the best criterion of a good government is the prosperity of the community.

The people of Geneva, at the beginning of the

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Constitu-
tion Anno
1700.

the present century, were divided into four classes: 1. The citizens; being the sons of citizens or of burghers, born at Geneva, and capable of holding every office in the state: 2. The burghers; or those who had purchased the freedom of the city, who sat in the general assembly, might be chosen into the council of two hundred, but were not admissible into the senate, or any of the higher employments in the government: 3. The natives; the sons of inhabitants, born at Geneva, but who enjoyed no municipal privileges, except a few commercial franchises: and lastly, the inhabitants, who could boast of no right except domiciliary sufferance. The sovereign power resided in the general assembly, at which every citizen and burgher above five and twenty years of age had a seat and suffrage. This assembly, besides its legislative authority, and the power of making war, peace, and alliances, and of imposing taxes, had, in its ordinary meetings, the right of electing all the principal magistrates, consisting of the four syndics, six auditors, the treasurer, and some law officers: but this right, in order to obviate the tumults that often attend free popular elections, extended no farther than the power of selecting out of a certain number of candidates proposed by the senate and great council. The executive power was vested in the

the senate, consisting of twenty-five members, and the great council of two hundred; the election into this senate and council, as well as various subordinate boards, being reserved to their own reciprocal nomination, without any interference on the part of the citizens. This privilege, together with the right of proposing candidates for the offices of magistracy, and other uncommon powers vested in the senate, it may well be imagined, were considered as aristocratical prerogatives, injurious to the sovereignty of the people; and accordingly were among the first causes of the frequent disturbances of which it is now required to take a cursory survey. The events here to be related, may indeed appear trivial to those accustomed to contemplate the concerns of great nations and extensive empires;² but they are not so to the philosophic mind, bent on tracing to its origin the impulse of the passions, which here displayed themselves with far less restraint than they are allowed to do in a vigorous and well regulated government: and the effects of which afford a memorable instance of the fallacy of human wisdom.³

² A monarch who lately filled one of the greatest thrones in Europe, has compared a commotion at Geneva to *a storm in a tea-cup*. A grave magistrate of Zurich (Burgomaster Heidegger) observed on a similar occasion that the Genevese kill themselves, for fear of falling sick.

³ The statements here given are almost wholly taken from the accounts of Meister and Meiners; both which are al-

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Troubles
appressed
in 1707.

No sooner had the independence and security of the republic acquired some degree of stability, than commerce and industry became prevalent among the citizens, and soon produced riches and luxury, which insensibly led to an inequality of conditions that powerfully stimulated the unruly passions of pride, envy, and ambition. The opulent and ruling families began now to transfer their habitations to a particular district named the city, while the inferior classes were retained in the lower town by their lucrative occupations. This habitual separation, added to the extent of power which the senate and great council arrogated to themselves, soon created a jealousy and alienation among the people, which was increased by every new incident, however trivial in its nature, or harmless

lowed by the learned and judicious G. E. Haller, and other competent judges, to be sufficiently accurate and impartial. We give them the preference before various more ample narratives, especially the valuable work of Sir Francis d'Ivernois; the authors we follow having been no ways personally concerned in the commotions. Several hundreds of publications on these troubles are enumerated by Haller, which at least shew that no argumentation has been spared in elucidating the points in contest. They who may not find the account here given sufficiently ample, will please to recollect that being intended chiefly for English readers a more circumstantial detail might be found tedious if not superfluous.

in its tendency. A material change in the disposition of all ranks of the inhabitants was likewise operated by the great number of French refugees who were allowed to settle in the city : and who gradually introduced a spirit of contention, egotism, envy, and insubordination, which prompted the people to place more confidence in their own strength, than in their constitution, or in the patriotism of their leaders. Several law suits were about this time determined in a manner that gave offence, not only to the parties condemned, but in some cases also to a numerous body of relatives and adherents : and one in particular, in which Fatio, a mem- Fatio. ber of the great council, a man of great parts, acquirements and energy, but withal of a most fiery and aspiring temper, had been called in as advocate, was decided in a manner displeasing to the majority of the citizens, and particularly offensive to the pleader. The discontented thought themselves called upon to take effectual steps towards securing themselves against farther encroachments of arbitrary power. The first grievance against which they determined to remonstrate was, the manner of voting at elections, which instead of an open suffrage, they, in a declaration delivered in to the attorney-general in the month of December, required to be henceforth decided in the manner prac-

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tised in the senate, by a secret ballot. Their demand, being contrary to the established laws, was negatived in the council : but the citizens persisted in their claim, alleging that in their request to amend an exceptionable law, they only expressed a wish to approach nearer to the mode of proceeding in the senate.

About this time one of the Trembley family was elected into the council in preference to an aged, respectable, and popular citizen, on whom, had the election been perfectly unbiased, it was imagined the choice would have fallen. The people noticed that there were already two of that name in the council ; and the addition of a third they thought contrary, if not to the letter, at least to the spirit of their laws. De la Chena, an enthusiastic republican, urged some of the citizens to renew, at the general assembly which was to meet in the month of January for the election of the syndics, the demand that all questions be decided by ballot : and others, availing themselves of the spirit of reform that prevailed among the people, were preparing motions for additional amendments, the principal of which were, that the senate should no longer interfere in the election of counsellors ; that the number of counsellors of the same family should be still farther restricted ; and that a code of the public edicts should be printed

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printed for the use of the citizens. Fatio checked the ardour of these hasty reformers, alleging that according to the fundamental laws, this general assembly, which met merely for the election of syndics, could take no cognizance of any matter which had not been previously discussed in the great council. De la Chena resolved now to pursue a different course: he drew up a memorial containing the abovementioned articles; caused it to be signed by a considerable number of citizens, and delivered it to the first syndic de Normandie. An order upon this was issued, prohibiting all signatures of this nature. De la Chena insisted that they were not an innovation; that no law existed against them; and that without them, the citizens had no means of conveying their proposals or remonstrances. The ex-syndic Trembley endeavoured to persuade him that mechanics are not competent judges of matters of state: 'and do you think,' answered de la Chena, 'that common sense is the exclusive monopoly of the senate?'

The great council called upon de la Chena to take back his memorial; and on his refusing to comply, the first syndic, in his presence, threw it into the fire. The enraged citizens had now recourse to the attorney-general; but soon found that this public officer, whose province

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vince it was to defend the rights of the people, was unwilling to espouse their cause. Five hundred of them assembled soon after, before the town-house, and were met by a deputation of the senate, with the second syndic Chouet at their head. He represented to them that the practice of signatures was of recent date, and at all times dangerous ; that the memorial had been burnt, not from any disrespect to the framers of it, but principally out of tenderness for some of those who had signed it ; and that for the same reason, the whole affair had better be buried in oblivion. A loud murmur ensued : Thomas de Lolme, in the name of the rest, exclaimed, ‘ What tenderness ? and for whom ? Signatures may be offensive to the senate, but they are not illegal.’ Chouet assured them that, so far from their memorial having been treated with contempt, commissioners had been actually appointed for the purpose of deliberating on its contents ; and proposed to them to chuse a number of delegates to be joined to this commission. The citizens instantly named the two lawyers, Fatio and Revillod, together with Piaget, Marcet, Le Maitre, de Lolme, de la Chena, and some others ; and the deliberations began without delay, but soon broke out into mutual reproaches and menaces. The delegates of the people

people at length consented to wave the right of subscription, if any other mode were pointed out to them for giving effect to their remonstrances. The syndics promised, that within a month a satisfactory answer should be returned; upon which the citizens adjourned to the Treille,¹ where Fatio mounted on a bench, and strove to pacify them. He assured them that the answer could not but be favourable; and that if it were otherwise, they might still have recourse to a general assembly. Their clamours ceased, and they withdrew peaceably.

Fatio recommended in council, that when either three senators, ten counsellors, or fifty citizens, gave in a proposal on any subject whatever, signed by them, the senate and council should immediately take it into consideration, and, within a fortnight, lay the result of their deliberations before the general assembly, there to be either confirmed or negatived. The magistrates now perceived that Fatio's drift was to establish the purest forms of democracy: and in order to gain time, in hopes of allaying the minds of the people, they proceeded very slowly in their deliberations. At length, on the eleventh of February, they resolved, that the mode of signature was not only superfluous, but dangerous; that only verbal

¹ A publick walk.

representations

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representations of the citizens should be admitted; that these should be taken into consideration within the space of one month after the communication; and that all the former edicts, together with the remarks of the magistrates thereon, should be forthwith sent to the press. The questions concerning the ballot, and the limitation of the number of kindred senators and counsellors, were adjourned to a future day.

Fatio meanwhile gained over two considerable adherents to his party, the auditor Gallatin, and the ex-counsellor and Prussian agent, de Normandie; and with them he planned a mode of election by ballot, which was adopted, and was long after practised. The citizens now called loudly for a committee for revising and promulgating the book of statutes: they once more proposed some restrictions concerning the number of kindred senators; but above all, demanded that an annual meeting of the general assembly should be held on the first of June, to decide on all new topics relating to the state. Gallatin added a proposal, that forty citizens should be admitted as honorary members or adjuncts, without right of suffrage, into the great council; and that the vacancies at that board be occasionally filled up by lot, from among this number.

The

The senate paying little regard to these proposals, the citizens met again in great numbers in the Manege, and exhorted each other to persist strenuously in their just demands. The senate had gained over a few of them, and these were branded with the appellation of new Mamelukes: but the magistrates, unable to stem the tide of popular clamour, agreed to a general legislative assembly, which was appointed for the twenty-eighth of April,⁵ to which no natives or inhabitants were to be admitted, and previous to which, singular precautions were taken to prevent tumults or insurrection. The senate decreed, that at the opening of the assembly, each member should take the oath usually administered to citizens; but these thought it a palpable incongruity to swear previously to a constitution, which in the course of the meeting might perhaps undergo some alteration. The objects in contemplation were warmly debated, not only in conversation, but in many fugitive writings; among which, '*A letter from one citizen to another,*' contained the following display of the principles maintained by the ruling party:—'A people,' it is there said, 'cannot govern itself: all who have attempted it, have sooner or later become the

⁵ It was postponed to the fifth of May.

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‘ slaves of their artful demagogues : but a people
 ‘ that entrusts others with the executive au-
 ‘ thority, never ceases to watch over the abuse
 ‘ of this delegated power : that state is free in
 ‘ which the people makes the laws. A people
 ‘ may resume its original power, but no wise
 ‘ people will ever do it on any but very urgent
 ‘ occasions.’ These maxims are next applied
 to the government of Geneva, and, after ex-
 . tiating largely on the excellence of its consti-
 tution : ‘ What can divert the magistrates,’
 adds the author, ‘ from the public good ? why
 ‘ should they be less zealous for it than the
 ‘ citizens ? Those who insinuate that the
 ‘ council endeavours to grasp at the sovereign
 ‘ authority, which belongs solely to the people,
 ‘ are vile calumniators : but the council knows
 ‘ the dangers of a popular assembly that ven-
 ‘ tures to deliberate on state affairs : our ances-
 ‘ tors knew these perils, at a time when the
 ‘ community consisted of only five or six hun-
 ‘ dred members. The maxim which asserts,
 ‘ that as soon as the general assembly is con-
 ‘ vened the magistrates are divested of all their
 ‘ authority, and that all citizens are equal, will
 ‘ ever be subversive of good government, and
 ‘ ultimately lead to anarchy.’ The author as-
 cribes the sentiments entertained by the citizens,
 partly to the opulence and ease of some, and
 in

in a still greater degree, to the ambition of the many who aspired to power and distinction. Fatio and his adherents called this writing, which had made some impression, a sophistical school declamation. The clergy on the other hand, inveighed bitterly from the pulpit against all abettors of unrestrained liberty. Such writings and such sermons were no doubt far better calculated to irritate than to conciliate the agitated minds of the people.

The general assembly met on the appointed day. Deputies had, not long before, probably at the desire of the magistrates, arrived from the allied cantons of Zurich and Berne, and appeared at the meeting. At the dawn of day the citizens assembled in the church of St. Magdalen: Piaget mounted on a bench, and exhorted them to firmness and perseverance: ‘Remember,’ said he, ‘that this day will either crown or defeat all your past endeavours: do not suffer yourselves to be awed at the appearance of your magistrates; they are only the first among equals; their pre-eminence vanishes in the presence of those who have conferred it: recollect at the same time, that order, decency, and moderation are the true attributes of the friends of liberty; and that without them, you will in vain hope to achieve your purpose.’ The citizens embraced, and proceeded

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proceeded quietly to the church of St. Peter. The senior minister, Calendrini, opened the meeting with a pathetic prayer. The Syndic de Normandie addressed the deputies of the cantons, stating the purpose of this assembly. Ulric, the burgomaster of Zurich, read his answer, in which he extolled the blessings of peace and unanimity, but which by no means accorded with the sentiments of the citizens. Chouet, the second syndic, spoke next: ‘ It were a ‘ crime,’ he said, with a great semblance of candour and popularity, ‘ to ask where the sovereignty of this state resides : it manifestly ‘ centres in this supreme legislative body. ‘ Complaints are made that it has not been assembled for upwards of a century : the true ‘ reason of this is, that no meeting has been ‘ demanded by the citizens. They might at ‘ any time have commanded it, and resumed the ‘ power they had delegated to the magistrates ; ‘ but of the dangers of this, our fathers and ourselves have been too well aware, to hazard so ‘ perilous a step. The great council is the ‘ minister, the representative of the sovereign : ‘ but a thousand years, in cases like this, do ‘ not establish a prescriptive right ; and the ‘ annual elections of the chief magistrates are a ‘ manifest proof that the citizens have not relinquished their supreme and inalienable prerogatives.’

• rogatives.' The prime syndic hereupon proposed the general oath: Piaget insisted on the glaring inconsistency of making a sovereign swear: and a general outcry arose that no oaths should be taken; those who seemed disposed to comply, being severely rebuked, and even insulted, by those who peremptorily refused it. The ministers held up their hands. Piaget taxed with treason all those who might offer to take the oath, before a majority had declared in favour of the measure.

Fatio spoke out of his turn, and was called to order by the prime syndic. The counsellors first declared their sentiments on the question. Some were of opinion that the citizens should swear individually, so that it might not appear that the sovereign body had collectively bound itself by an oath: others were for modifying the form. The attorney-general delivered a speech he had previously prepared, which was no ways relevant. The clergy were next heard, and they unanimously insisted on the oath being taken. While the votes were collecting, Fatio expatiated on the impropriety of allowing the deputies of the cantons to be present at this meeting; urging that the precedent would at any time authorize the envoys of France to insist on the same privilege. The prime syndic, with a degree of petulance ill becoming

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becoming his station, exclaimed: 'If Fatio will be master here, he may e'en take my seat. With this he broke up the assembly, and adjourned it to the following Thursday. The Swiss deputies the next day received a profusion of apologies from the magistrates, clergy, and principal citizens, for the uncourteous manner in which they had been treated the preceding day at the assembly. These apparently extenuated the offence; but yet their reports to their sovereigns were not wholly free from sinister imputations; and it was evident that their prejudices against the citizens were daily increasing.

The first question at the next meeting related to the presence of the deputies. Fatio being the only one who opposed it, some members were sent to conduct them to the church. Each of them delivered a pathetic discourse, stating that their governments had indeed directed them to attend the important meetings that were now to be held, but by no means without the free consent of the assembly; and they moreover declared, that this instance should on no account be construed into a precedent. The prime syndic upon this reported, that the great council had totally relinquished their proposal of a previous oath, and that a committee had been actually named for deliberating on the question.

question of the ballot. Fatio moved that the ballot should be adopted at the present meeting, in order to prove by experience whether in fact it would be attended with all the inconveniences that had been urged against it. He was strongly opposed by Dr. Chenaud, who proposed four articles, which he no ways doubted would effectually restore tranquillity: 1. the publication of the edicts; a point which had already been conceded: 2. the voting by ballot: and 3. and 4. two regulations of no great moment, concerning the elections and exclusions in the magistracy. His plan met with general approbation; and it was proposed that the articles should be referred to the examination of the Swiss deputies. ‘God forbid!’ exclaimed Fatio with vehemence, ‘that we should declare ourselves incapable of restoring our own domestic tranquillity.’ He reprobated the plan of Chenaud; and the citizens once more allowed themselves to be blindly swayed by their popular leaders. The debate degenerated into tumult, and it was with much difficulty that the syndics found means to adjourn the meeting to the twenty-sixth day of the same month. During this interval, great efforts were made by the friends of peace to restore harmony: but Fatio was inflexible, and determined to pursue his object to its completion.

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tion. Besides the former claims concerning the ballot, the promulgation of the edicts, and the limitation of the number of kindred in the councils, he now insisted more particularly on stated and periodical meetings of the general legislative assembly. While he was thus inflaming the minds of some, the enthusiasm of others abated; the friends of government gradually increased, and even the auditor Gallatin, a man, the chief features in whose character appear to have been moderation and candour, espoused the cause of the senate. Fatio however preserved sufficient influence to obtain from the great council a vote for submitting to the general assembly, besides the articles proposed by Chenaud, likewise the establishment of a periodical legislative assembly; a particular mode of voting by delivering the suffrages to four secretaries, to be chosen occasionally by the syndics, two out of the council and two from among the citizens; and that not more than three brethren, or a father and two sons, should be allowed to sit at the same time in the council.

At the general assembly of the twenty-sixth of May, which was likewise attended by the Swiss deputies, the votes were collected in succession, but not without some confusion. To the astonishment of the popular leaders, a majority

jority of fifty rejected the mode of voting by CHAP.
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 ballot. Fatio ascribed this partly to the tedious speeches of the syndics and deputies, which induced many of the citizens to depart without voting, and partly to many of the voters having been intimidated by significant hints and nods from the secretaries. The question was now proposed, whether the articles should be put to the vote collectively or separately. The former mode appeared to have the approbation of the magistrates, and was perhaps for this very reason opposed by Fatio, Marcet, and de la Chena. The delegates of the citizens at the same time observing that many were withdrawing from the assembly, called loudly for an adjournment to the next day. The syndics refused to comply, and began to collect the votes; upon which many more citizens absented themselves. About three hundred collected in a remote part of the church, and refused to vote. Dentan, one of the most restless among them, repeatedly exclaimed, 'they have deceived us; they mean to over-reach us.' The syndic de Normandie went up to Fatio, took him by the hand, and addressing him in a conciliatory tone, 'You may restore peace,' he said; 'persuade these seceders to imitate the example of their fellow-citizens.' 'I have no right to command them,' answered Fatio abruptly. The votes

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were numbered : eight hundred against thirty-eight determined in favour of the articles being proposed collectively. The Swiss deputies and the magistrates, conceiving this to be a complete triumph, now congratulated each other on their success ; and the former recommended a general amnesty, which the latter declared they were ready to proclaim. Fatio, who had withdrawn, returned to the assembly, and remonstrated in the name of the three hundred who had declined to vote, that the citizens had been deceived by ambiguous propositions ; that even if the votes of the majority were a fair decision, it went no further than that all the articles should be proposed together, and by no means that they were, by this vote, either accepted or negatived. Instead of answering, the magistrates desired him to come to the town-house. The Swiss deputies there represented to him that he ought to conform to the decision of the majority, and that he would have to answer for the consequences, if the concourse of people at the church did not immediately disperse ; and they at the same time declared that the two cantons they represented would be ready to support the vote of the general assembly. Fatio, perceiving now that he could not at present accomplish his object, admonished the people to separate, and withdrew to his dwelling.

The

The crowd was actually dispersing, when three companies of city guards appeared, by order of the senate, before the church. The commanding officer having directed all who still remained, to repair immediately to their homes, one of the least timid among them demanded by whose authority he took upon him to give such orders? 'By an authority,' replied the captain, drawing his sword, 'which both you and I must obey.' Some citizens, who were armed, likewise drew their swords, and a scuffle ensued: those who had previously departed, ran through the streets and called to arms; and all the shops and warehouses were immediately shut. The populace was now preparing to attack the houses of the Mamelukes: the women, the wife of Fatio at their head, hastened to bring arms to those who had remained behind in the church; the guards meanwhile, whether directed, or awed by the tumult, remained wholly inactive. Fatio once more exhorted the multitude to disperse, and was the first who retired to his house. Many counsellors and ministers resorted to the public places, explained and justified the proceedings of the magistrates, and admonished the people to preserve the peace. The immediate declaration of an amnesty seemed indeed to have restored tranquillity; but the citizens, it soon ap-

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peared,

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appeared, could not so readily forget the unlooked-for appearance of the companies of guards. The party of the senate perceived the rapid progress of their unpopularity. One of the secretaries was taxed with having unduly collected the votes at the last general assembly : partial tumults arose : the magistrates ordered the military posts to be reinforced ; and, under pretence of guarding against external dangers, demanded auxiliaries from the two allied cantons, which were immediately granted: This measure was represented by the senate to the great council, merely as a precautionary step, for the security of the city against foreign insult.

A short interval of tranquillity.

The Swiss mediators departed from Geneva on the third of June. The deputy of Berne, on taking leave of the senate, exhorted them to maintain, by moderation and courteousness, the tranquillity that he trusted was now restored ; and to study to gain the affections of the people. ‘ Men,’ he observed, ‘ seldom notice the faults of those superiors whom they love ; whereas even the virtues of those, whose persons they dislike, are converted into odious blemishes. Remember that fear is a feeble check upon a free-minded people : and above all, that you have promised us to bury all past offences in oblivion.’ The delegates of the citizens attended

tended them in the streets, and thanked them for their salutary interference. The deputies declared their approbation of Fatio's conduct in the last stage of the disturbance; and exacted a promise from him to put a stop to the meetings of his party, which they considered as the source of all the evil.

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On the very day in which the deputies departed, three hundred Swiss auxiliaries were admitted into the city. From this moment the senate acquired fresh confidence, and exerted an unlooked-for rigour. Unguarded expressions were noticed and chastised; and Fatio, instead of being (as had been preconceived) induced by gentle means to suspend his attendance at the council, was apprised in an imperious manner, that his presence would be dispensed with. His friends indeed complained, though faintly, of an infraction of the amnesty; but the greatest number of the citizens seemed better disposed to attend quietly to their respective avocations in their workshops and counting-houses, than to watch the proceedings of government. A sullen tranquillity prevailed throughout the city. One harsh decree was succeeded by another; while the incautious magistrates, indulging in frequent and sumptuous festivals, held out an odious contrast between their luxurious gratifications, and the severities

Fresh disturbances.

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severities they inflicted on the people. Fatio, Marcet, and their friends, being excluded from these pleasurable entertainments, resolved to have a festive meeting of their own ; but they received a mandate, enjoining them to desist from their purpose. The time now approached when, according to ancient custom, certain military sports and exercises were practised at Geneva. Marcet had three years successively merited the rank of King of the Archers ; and during the troubles, had biassed all the officers of his corps in favour of the remonstrating citizens. The council, which neglected no means that seemed calculated to strengthen their party, excited all their young men to strive for the chief prize in archery. The son of the ex-syndic Trembley obtained it this year ; and a sumptuous feast having been given him on the occasion, he returned it with a banquet far more splendid than had ever been seen at Geneva. In the intoxication of mirth and conviviality, the dangers of the times were wholly forgotten. Some, foreboding the revengeful spirit of the senate, exhorted Fatio to absent himself ; but he spurned the advice, declaring that he would never avow himself guilty by absconding. ‘ No one,’ he added, ‘ can hate me, but he who hates the laws. If the senate aims at my life or my honour, I am willing
‘ to

‘to shew how a citizen ought to bear injustice, and to shed his blood in the cause of his country. Perhaps the remembrance of my untimely end may prove far more beneficial to my fellow-citizens, than the most zealous services I might still render them, in a life of ever so long a period.’ Some prompted him to make fresh representations to the senate, ‘This,’ he answered, ‘is not the proper time : better wait till five years hence, when at the next general assembly I may perhaps succeed to the office of attorney-general.’ The senators trembled when they heard that the popular party were endeavouring to raise him to that eminent station. The leaders of this party now interrogated the magistrates, what could be the motive for introducing Swiss troops into the city? ‘No doubt,’ said some of them, ‘they are here rather to intimidate us, than to provide for our safety. Who is it that has called them in? certainly not the general assembly, which is alone authorized to take a step of such importance.’

On a sudden appeared before the senate, Brochet, an inn-keeper, till now of the discontented party, who declared that a dreadful conspiracy was at hand; that a plot was laid for seizing the arsenal, and to get rid of the Swiss-auxiliaries, and of several of the counselors ;

Quelled by
severity.

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lors; that Piaget and le Maitre were to head the insurrection, in which he had himself been offered a considerable share. Le Maitre was immediately seized: Piaget absconded; and his wife was in vain called upon to reveal the place of his concealment. Fatio was apprised of his own danger; but far from absenting himself, he appeared publicly, and was taken into custody without any charge having been exhibited against him. Four articles were found among his papers, which not he, but de la Chena, had drawn up, and intended to lay before the next general assembly. Their tenor was, 1. that in future the council should not call in any foreign troops without the consent of the general assembly; 2. that such troops should never be allowed to act against the citizens: 3. that the proceedings of the great council, which in fact represented the body of the people, should be subjected to a yearly investigation in the general assembly: and 4. that Fatio should be allowed to resume his seat in the said council.

The senate stationed a strong guard at the prison, and ordered continual patrols throughout the city. De la Chena was likewise apprehended, Le Maitre being confronted with his accuser, the latter persisted in his deposition, while the former denied every article, except a
few

few inconsiderate words against the auxiliaries, and his having answered to a certain person, who asked of him whether all was quiet, that the fire still glowed under the embers: these words were construed into a proof of the conspiracy. A reward of three hundred crowns was offered for the head of Piaget; and in order to prevent his escape, members of the council watched day and night at the gates, to see who passed. After he had lain two days concealed in a cellar, his corpse was found in the river, where he had been drowned in attempting to save himself by swimming.

The senate hereupon assembled the great council, and reported all the discoveries they had made concerning the conspiracy, and its several authors. Le Maitre was put to the rack: all who resided near the place of examination were enjoined to leave their houses, that they might not hear the depositions or the screams of the devoted culprit. All that the most excruciating torments could extort from him was, 'Treat me as you please: I have no accomplices, for I am innocent.' His wife, his aged and disconsolate mother, and his little children, implored for mercy; but he was doomed to die, and heard the awful sentence without either terror or compunction. His wife, and some of his friends, entreated him to ap-
peal

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peal to the general assembly ; but he scorned the expedient. Unknown to him, they presented a petition, in which, without pretending to deny his guilt, they remonstrated that he had been convicted upon the evidence of one single witness ; of a man whom, seven years before, the senate had sentenced to death, and who would have suffered had he not been pardoned by the great council ; of one who was the declared enemy of the accused, and had been often heard to utter threats of vengeance against him. To the minister who attended him, he said, with a calm countenance, ‘ What-
 ‘ ever disturbances I may have promoted be-
 ‘ fore the amnesty, they may truly be imputed
 ‘ to genuine patriotism. I never aspired to
 ‘ honours or offices, for which I knew myself
 ‘ by no means qualified. The plots that are
 ‘ laid to my charge, required money, talents,
 ‘ eloquence, and influence, none of which had
 ‘ fallen to my share. I fall a victim to state
 ‘ policy.’ He acknowledged that the loss of a
 law-suit had ‘ soured his temper. At the
 town-house he heard his final sentence on his
 knees with great composure, until mention was
 made of the conspiracy. He then exclaimed,
 ‘ That is false, and my accuser is an infamous
 ‘ calumniator.’ At the fatal tree he once more
 asserted his innocence ; and whilst the execu-
 tioner

tioner was strangling him, the people uttered loud cries and deep groans of anguish and commiseration.

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De la Chena was next brought before the senate; and with terror and confusion approached the awful tribunal. He was charged with having been the first author of the disturbances; that by means of the four articles found among Fatio's papers, he had intended to raise fresh insurrections; that he had uttered opprobrious language against the magistrates and the clergy; and that by these, and other treasonable practices, he had amply deserved capital punishment. In consideration of his pusillanimity, his life was spared; but he was sentenced to forfeit the freedom of the city, to be banished for life, and to pay all costs. De la Chena, bathed in tears, acknowledged that his delinquency exceeded his punishment; and prayed that he might suffer death, since he could not possibly live separated from his beloved family and intimates: but his prayer was disregarded. He repaired to Morges, where he survived twelve years in a small municipal office. Piaget was hanged in effigy.

When Fatio heard of these proceedings, he foreboded his own destiny. As no accuser appeared against him, he apprehended that poison would be the means of dispatching him; and hence

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hence abstained from all food, except eggs. His conduct in the last insurrection was brought as a charge against him: he was reminded of instances when he had arraigned the decrees of the general assembly: he was taxed with having illegally assembled the citizens, and having four articles in his possession, the tendencies of which were evidently seditious. He answered, that as often as he heard of a tumult, he always hastened among the insurgents in order to disperse them; and that, in fact, he had frequently succeeded to quell disturbances: that he had indeed often conversed on state affairs; and that he knew no subject more befitting the deliberation of good citizens: that he had never convened assemblies, but occasionally visited his friends; and that as to the four articles, they had been given him for his opinion, and that he disapproved of them. His defence availed not: he was sentenced to lose his head. He likewise would deliver in no petition. 'Death,' he said, 'is infinitely preferable to ignominy; and he deserves ignominy who, being innocent, condescends to ask for mercy.' His brother, a counsellor, declared that he acknowledged the guilt of the sentenced culprit; but that the punishment would reflect infamy upon all his kindred; and that he himself would be compelled to lay down his offices,

offices, if his brother suffered by the hand of a public executioner. The council extended their lenity so far as to order that Fatio should be shot, and thus die by the hands of soldiers; that his sentence should be announced to him in prison; that the bell should not toll as usual at executions; that the wands of the syndics should be sent privately to the prison; and that the ministers should go thither disguised in secular dresses. When he was told that he had but a few minutes to live, he started, but soon recovered his serenity: 'I may have been guilty of some indiscretions,' he said, 'but surely not of any crime. I am persuaded that I have rendered some service to my country: I can with satisfaction survey my past life; and shall meet death with resignation.' On hearing his sentence pronounced, he opened a Bible, and read to his judges the first verse of the fifty-eighth psalm.⁶ On descending to the court where the sentence was to be executed, some offered to assist him, but he declined their aid, saying, 'I am in health and vigour, and can walk alone.' Without the least emotion he tied up his eyes, and pointed to the soldiers where to direct their muskets. He prayed, and

⁶ 'Are your minds set upon righteousness, O ye congregation: and do ye judge the things that are right, O ye sons of men?'

uttered

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uttered these last words ; ‘ I am innocent, and
‘ they take away my life : Almighty God, grant
‘ me the power to forgive them.’ The only
fault his friends imputed to him, was too great
a fondness for argumentation ; and a vindic-
tive spirit was the greatest blemish the most in-
veterate of his enemies could add to that de-
fect.

Many other severe penalties were, during
this and the following year, inflicted on vari-
ous citizens. After the hearts of most of them
had been sufficiently alienated, and nothing
but the terror of the late executions restrained
their fierce resentment, the magistrates ordained
an extraordinary fast-day, in which the clergy
did not fail to extol the justice of the govern-
ment, and the salutary effects of their seasonable
firmness. The auxiliaries were soon after dis-
missed ; but the companies of the city guards
were augmented each to ninety men.

The time approached now when, as had been
decreed five years before, the periodical general
assembly was to meet for the first time. The
citizens were actually convened on the tenth
of December : but a majority immediately re-
pealed the very edict by virtue of which they
had been called together ; and thus destroyed
in an instant the very basis of the structure
which had been reared by Fatio, and to which
he

he had sacrificed his life. Numbers of the people were penetrated with sorrow and disdain; but the party of the magistrates publicly and loudly exulted in this happy deliverance from the trammels of a superintending authority.

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To have entered thus minutely into the origin, progress, and fatal termination of the above disturbances, will scarcely be deemed superfluous, if we reflect that from these beginnings arose all the troubles that have distracted this unhappy city for near a century, and impelled it at length to its utter ruin. From this circumstantial detail we learn to appreciate the pernicious effects of the restless disposition of the people, which repeatedly called forth coercive, and no doubt often unjustifiable measures, on the part of the magistrates; thus by a circular operation of reciprocal causes, producing evils which a few wise and moderate citizens deeply lamented, but could not remedy. From a near contemplation of these troubles, and an investigation of the stimulating causes that excited them, we may in a great measure prognosticate the subsequent struggles which could not but be produced by such jarring elements: and the writer may hence proceed in his narrative, without dwelling on the nicer shades,
which

CHAP. which distinguish the characters of the future
IX. agents, and the temper of the times.'

' An intelligent and candid observer, who is thoroughly acquainted with the late revolutions of Geneva, and who has bestowed a perusal upon these pages before they went to press, has favoured the author with the following remarks ; which as they place the motives that excited these troubles in a somewhat different light, will, it is hoped not be unacceptable to the readers whose main object is to arrive at truth. ' The statement here given,' he says, ' is manifestly ' drawn from the writers of the popular party. The government of Geneva was no doubt in many instances exceptionable in point of conduct, nor were its sentences always ' strictly equitable ; but the culprits, on the other hand, ' were far from being so innocent as has been represented. ' The project of periodical assemblies, and of referring all ' the acts of the executive body to the perpetual revision of ' the general assembly, was a fundamental innovation, foreign ' to our laws and to our established usages. Its tendency ' was wholly to subvert the mixed form of our government, ' and to convert it into a democracy. The general assembly ' would thereby soon have been degraded into an ordinary ' council of administration : anarchical innovations would ' have succeeded each other in a rapid progression : and ' hence the promoters of this plan can only be considered as ' factious disturbers of an established government. They ' bequeathed their disorganizing ideas to all the demagogues ' who took the lead in the subsequent troubles. Micheli du ' Crest (the philosopher) seized on them with eagerness ; and ' he, with numbers of other popular leaders, have ever since ' incessantly laboured to establish these general assemblies ' of revision, of censure, of legislation, of motions ; the introduction of which had been first suggested by Fatio and ' his

The magistrates of Geneva having now, CHAP.
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 though not altogether broken, yet considerably loosened the bonds that restrained their power, 2. Troubles
appeared in
1734.
 boldly attempted a measure, which, if carried, they hoped would at once establish their authority upon a solid and permanent foundation. Two years after its last triumph, the senate, 1714.
 prompted by the persuasions of the young officers who periodically returned from France, where Vauban, and other eminent engineers, had brought the science of fortification into the greatest repute, determined to make considerable additions to the works round the city; and in order to raise the fund necessary for that purpose, resolved to impose a tax on the citizens, which was annually to yield the sum of ten thousand crowns; and moreover, to borrow from them two hundred and seventy thousand crowns, for which they offered to pay an interest of three per cent. The attempt was premature: the citizens took the alarm; many expatiated against the encroachment upon the privilege of the general and sovereign assembly,

‘ his colleagues; and of which the popular party never lost sight during eighty years of incessant commotions, in which the senate, awed by the audacity of the innovators, threw itself into the opposite extreme, and attempted to counteract their efforts by an extension of its own prerogatives.’

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which,

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which, they said, in constituting subordinate authorities, had never divested itself of the right of taxation. After these murmurs had lasted some years, two anonymous letters appeared, in which the magistrates were publicly charged with flagrant designs of undermining the constitution. These were immediately declared seditious; and their distribution was strictly prohibited.

Micheli du
Crest.

1719.

One of the principal abettors of these new troubles was Micheli du Crest; a man descended from a noble Genevese family, who, after the death of his father, had been involved in vexatious law-suits concerning his inheritance, in which he was cast. Enraged at what he deemed an iniquitous sentence, he, without complying with the decree of the tribunal, repaired to his company in the French service; and thence, in the course of the next year, sent in a writing to the military commission at Geneva, in which he severely censured the newly adopted plan of fortification. Notwithstanding the avowed opposition, he was in the same year elected into the great council. Here he reprobated that plan with uncommon asperity; and soon after, once more forsook his native city. In a paper he published at Strasburg, he criticised every part of the plan, which was now advancing in its execution; and unequivocally

1728.

vocally taxed the inspector of the works with gross ignorance, and corrupt profusion.

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1729.

On the sixth of January of the ensuing year, the senate ordered, 'that du Crest should make a public recantation, and deliver in all his seditious writings:' but he, spurning the decree, published a vindication, which he dedicated to the Duke du Maine. On the thirtieth of May, in the succeeding year, he was expelled the great council, deprived of the freedom of the city, and condemned to forfeit the whole of his property. In the next month of October he became acquainted at Frankfort with two of his countrymen, named Lenleps and Joly, whom, both in conversation and writing, he excited against the magistracy: he persuaded them that the supreme power resided solely in the citizens; that all sentences and decrees ought to be confirmed by them; and maintained other similar opinions highly palatable to the lower classes of men. This correspondence was betrayed; and on the succeeding eighth of June, he was sentenced to perpetual imprisonment. This decree greatly added to his inveteracy.

1730.

1731.

His party at Geneva became gradually so formidable, that in order to obviate greater disorders, the council found it necessary to commute the tax imposed for carrying on the for-

1734.

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tifications into a voluntary contribution. Notwithstanding this mitigation, the citizens often met in consultation; and eight hundred of them came to the attorney-general, with a petition, in which they remonstrated against all taxes hitherto levied; animadverted upon certain decisions of the senate, which they deemed partial; and prayed for an immediate convocation of the general assembly. The senate maintained, that according to the records, and especially a formal edict of the preceding century,^a all contested points are left to the decision of the council. The citizens, far from acquiescing in this, became more clamorous, and threw out some menaces. The council assembled on the seventh of June: on the twenty-third the citizens delivered to the syndics and the attorney-general a declaration, in which they protested, that they by no means wished or demanded any change in the form of government, but that they merely desired some explanation concerning the taxes, and the fortifications. The council, without giving a decided answer, broke up much earlier than usual, for the summer vacation.

Meanwhile a report being spread that troops were arriving from Berne to protect the magis-

^a Of the year 1570.

tracy,

tracy, the citizens continued to hold frequent meetings, and shewed great signs of disaffection. On the twenty-ninth of June they once more made a formal requisition for a general assembly. Two auditors were sent to divert them from their purpose; but to no effect: they rioted all night throughout the city; and seemed disposed to proceed to acts of violence. The syndics, and several of the counsellors, repaired to the town-house. Lest the citizens should seize on the cannon belonging to the city, the syndic Trembley ordered two-and-twenty of them to be spiked with wooden pegs. The citizens, enraged at this mark of distrust, demanded, on the fourth of July, that the custody of the principal posts in the city, should be committed to their care. This being granted, a few of the insurgents led out, and planted four pieces of ordnance, at the gate at which they had been informed a body of Swiss troops was to be admitted; and the report of the approach of these auxiliaries having been industriously propagated, all the citizens armed, and took possession of all the city gates and out-posts.

On the eighth of July, the council summoned a meeting of the citizens, and proposed the questions, whether the fortifications should be continued? and, if approved, whether they would

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would consent to some further imposts for that purpose? To the astonishment of many, who thought so rapid a return to moderation an event rather to be wished than expected, both points were unanimously agreed to; whereupon, in order to promote this manifestation of perfect concord, the council proclaimed a general amnesty.

Fresh deputies from Berne and Zurich, who had been invited by the magistrates, appeared on the eighteenth of July; but were assured, both by the council and the citizens, that perfect tranquillity had been restored, and that the custody of the city was again surrendered to the garrison. Some of the counsellors however, were still suspected of harbouring designs inimical to the liberties of the people; nor could the citizens brook the reproach cast upon them by the spiking of the cannon. By this, and other unpopular acts, the syndic Trembley had rendered himself particularly obnoxious: some attempts were made on his person, and a number of citizens one evening prevented the keys of the city gates from being taken to his house. This, and other untoward incidents, induced him to offer the resignation of his office of syndic of the guard, which however the senate refused to accept.

Conceiving that all dangers were at an end,
the

the deputies of the cantons now left the city. From this moment every expedient was contrived for keeping Trembley (who had repaired to a country-house) from returning into the town; and another plot against the privileges of the people, was now laid to his charge. The senate released the garrison from the oath they had taken to him; and ordered them to swear obedience to the prime syndic. On the twenty-fourth day of October, the citizens, after church service, assembled at the usual place of meeting; and here assented to a paper to be delivered to the syndics, in which they demanded explicit answers to the three following points: 1. The motive for barricading the upper part of the city, where the magistrates chiefly resided; for which quantities of timber had already been collected? 2. the real purpose of an order which Trembley had given to the garrison, and which appeared to strike at the security of the citizens, and the fundamental laws of the state? and 3. the reason why great numbers of loaded muskets were kept in readiness at the arsenal, and other hostile preparations were carried on with uncommon activity? The administration of the penal laws being committed to the senate, the citizens urged that body to take immediate cognizance of these delinquencies, and to inflict condign punishment

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punishment on the perpetrators. On the Friday following the senate declared, with only two dissentient voices, that Trembley's project had been planned with the knowledge and approbation of the government; that by virtue of the amnesty of the sixth of August, no further investigation on the subject would now take place; and that the charges therefore required no answers. This declaration was soon after confirmed by the great council; but this body was not equally unanimous as to the reply to be made to the citizens. The matter was referred to a committee consisting of five senators, eight counsellors, the senior pastors, and thirty-four deputies of the citizens.

A report having been spread that fresh deputies were coming from the cantons, the citizens mounted cannons upon the ramparts, and assembled in companies. On the fifth of December it was resolved in a secret committee of the citizens, that eleven of the senators should be deposed; and on the same evening they declared this resolution to the thirty-four deputies, who after debating till past midnight, at last decided by ballot, that five of the senators, and the auditor de Carro, should be dismissed; and that the syndic Trembley should be banished. On the sixth the citizens met in companies: many opposed the resolutions of the preceding

preceding night, but they were laughed to scorn. The framers of them acknowledged that they were severe, but at the same time insisted that they were indispensably necessary. 'Either,' said they, 'we must destroy others, or they will destroy us.' In this state of tumult and confusion, the majority proceeded towards the town-house. Many of the counsellors were in doubt what measures to pursue: they assembled, and the thirty-four delegates demanded admission. The council being informed that the town-house was completely invested by the citizens, deputed the syndics to hold a conference with them. These having reported the demands of the citizens, Trembley, Chapeaurouge, and Tronchin, three of the accused counsellors who were present at the meeting, declared that they were ready to sacrifice their offices to the public tranquillity; while the friends and relations of those who were absent protested against all proceedings, until the parties had been heard in their own defence. The usual preparatory steps were taken towards a criminal process; but meanwhile the citizens would suffer no one to depart; and about noon the whole city was in arms.

The council now put three propositions successively to the vote. 1. That no positive answer be given to the citizens: 2. that a general

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neral assembly be summoned for the following week: and 3. that the members accused, as well the three present, as those who were absent, should vacate their seats both in the senate and council. After much debate and altercation, the last measure was at length adopted at the request of the members under accusation; and the council moreover declared that Trembley's plan of fortification had been irregularly introduced. The syndics reported this decree to the deputies of the citizens; but these did by no means express themselves fully satisfied, and still insisted that all the demands of the citizens should be complied with unconditionally. Flushed with success, they appeared again before the council, on the twelfth of December, with additional articles, among which the following were the principal: 1. That a general assembly be convened; that all that had been decreed since the second of March, be there solemnly confirmed; and that a general amnesty be thereupon declared: 2. that during the holding of the general assembly, the custody of the principal church, and the great place, be committed to a company of citizens: and 3. that the code of laws, which had been long demanded, be forthwith published. These articles were a few days after accepted without hesitation, at a council, which indeed was not
1 attended

attended by half its members. On the twentieth, the general assembly confirmed all the regulations hitherto made: and the citizens surrendered the different posts to the garrison: reserving the right to assemble in companies without the permission of the council, and to appoint committees whenever they should see fit. Although the deposed counsellors, and the exiled Trembley, still retained a number of adherents, as well in this as in the neighbouring governments, yet no effectual steps were taken in their behalf; and the magistrates even found themselves compelled to censure, as highly reprehensible, a memorial which Trembley transmitted in justification of his conduct.

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IX.

Momentary triumph
of Democracy.

Micheli du Crest, meanwhile, composed at Chene,⁹ his present place of refuge, several memorials, petitions, and remonstrances, of which, in the following year, many hundreds of copies were distributed at Geneva. These various seeds of discord generated three different parties, among which that of the council gradually obtained the superiority; and on the eighth of December, du Crest was declared an enemy of the state. His principal remonstrance, which he entitled *Placet de recours*, was burnt by the public executioner; and his effigy was affixed to the gallows. This order, which it was as-

3. Fresh
dissensions
terminated
in 1738.
1735.

⁹ A village on the confines of Savoy.

serted

CHAP. asserted ought to have been submitted to the ultimate decision of the citizens, increased the public clamours ; and du Crest, availing himself of the distraction that prevailed in the city, offered to appear in person before the general assembly, in his own vindication ; but the senate frustrated his design, and he once more withdrew to Paris. Three young-citizens, who had engaged to introduce him into the city, were apprehended. One of them, not being able to find an advocate among the citizens, had recourse to a stranger. This being forbidden by the senate, the citizens raised a general outcry, alleging that this prohibition was a manifest violation of one of the fundamental laws of the republic. They debated the point in one of their assemblies : the syndics offered to dissolve the assembly ; but to this attempt all the citizens, however divided in other respects, opposed their united efforts. In order to prevent greater disturbances, the three youths freely waved the privilege acknowledged by the law ; and the greatest lenity was hereupon shewn them in the sentences that were pronounced against them.

This indulgence irritated the friends of the expelled counsellors, at the head of whom was the Count de Montreal, a rich and enterprising citizen, and once a great favourer of the popular

pular party, one of his dependents having been convicted of giving pecuniary rewards to the citizens for their political signatures. The British resident, Count de Marsay, likewise took the part of the deposed counsellors, and used all means to gain over the cantons. The party of the council, or as it was now called of the *tamponneurs*,¹⁰ daily gained ground. The minds of men were so irritated that the least private dispute, the instant soldiers interfered, became an object of public contention. Montreal took possession of the arsenal; and the citizens on the other hand, once more invested the town-house. The syndics endeavoured to moderate their fury, but could not prevent some effusion of blood. The *tamponneurs* had the garrison on their side. The popular party, who had not yet forgotten the executions of Fatio and le Maitre, and the frequent attempts their rulers had made upon the rights they esteemed sacred, broke out into open violence so early as the third year after their late unavailing triumph. Its leaders, on the twenty-first of August, having taken umbrage at the sentence the magistrates had pronounced against one of their number, which they deemed injurious, once more called the citizens to arms in

1797.

¹⁰ Cannonspikers.

defence,

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defence, as they alleged, of oppressed innocence. The friends of the magistrates armed likewise, and encounters took place in which some lives were lost. The citizens once more took possession of the gates and guard-houses, and seized the person of the first syndic. The French resident, de la Closure, interfered, and brought about a temporary amnesty, during which the chief of the tamponneurs, and many of the peaceful inhabitants, withdrew out of the city, together with their families. No hopes of accommodation, it was now manifest, could be entertained, but through the interference of the mediating powers: and accordingly the deputies of Berne and Zurich soon after appeared; and letters came from France, severely censuring the conduct of the citizens, and at the same time offering its friendly offices towards a compromise. Circumstanced as they were, the citizens placed little confidence in the plausible professions of the guarantees; they insisted that they were competent to restore tranquillity without the interference of other powers, and urgently demanded a convocation of the general assembly. Although this was for some time strenuously opposed by the mediators, it was yet at length conceded; and the assembly met on the twenty-sixth of September, where, with a fickleness of which few

few examples can be cited, a great majority voted in favour of the mediation.

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Fortunately for Geneva, the Cardinal de Fleury had the welfare of the republic sincerely at heart. He named the Count de Lautrec to conduct the negotiation, and instructed him to use his best endeavours, to put a final stop to the unhappy dissensions which had so long preyed upon its vitals. The citizens chose thirty-four delegates to confer with him on the subject; and to these were joined the deputies of the allied cantons. After a careful inspection of all the documents that were exhibited by both parties, and much debate and admonition, an agreement was at length framed, which was formally accepted and ratified on the eighth day of May, and was considered as the future basis of the Genevan constitution. Its chief object was to define accurately the powers vested in the senate and council, and those reserved to the general assembly, which latter, in fact, extended to all acts of the sovereign authority. The article which met with most opposition on the part of the citizens, was the reinstatement of the magistrates who had been deposed on the former pacification; but the difficulty soon vanished before the powerful interposition of the mediators. In addition to various regulations, most of which had

1798.

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had been before extant, it was enacted that this agreement should be liable to no alteration without the consent of the general assembly, duly convened by the senate and council ; and what is of far greater consequence, that no one should dare to take up arms without the consent and express order of the magistracy. To the forty-four articles of which this memorable edict consisted, was added the declaration of the guarantee of the mediating powers ; a fatal blow no doubt to the independence of the republic, since it authorized at all times the interference of preponderating neighbours.

Du Crest had used all his endeavours at Paris to be comprized in the amnesty granted on this occasion ; but as he could not be brought to acknowledge any delinquency, but peremptorily insisted on the justice that was due to him, no attention was paid to his importunities. It became now impossible for him to control his restless temper : he came into Swisserland ; but both Zuric and Berne refused to admit him. At the request of the government of Geneva, he was at length confined in the hospital of Berne. Although he was here deprived of writing materials, he nevertheless found means to cause a petition to be laid before the senate of Berne, and obtained a mitigation of his confinement. With water and the

1744.

the snuff of a candle he prepared ink; his pen was an iron pin he had loosened from the bars in the window. Being suffered to receive visitors, he involved himself in the conspiracy which soon broke out against the government of Berne. He was hereupon removed to the castle of Arburg, where he lived to a very advanced age. He beguiled the tediousness of his confinement by the study of natural philosophy and geometry. His thermometers have been long used. Besides many political writings, he published also a treatise on the barometer and thermometer, physical researches, a tract on the deluge, and various other *opuscula*.

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Although the conspiracy that broke out about this time at Berne does not precisely come within the general denomination assigned to this section, yet as it was in some measure fomented by one of the ringleaders of the troubles of Geneva, and was probably an emanation of the restless spirit that had for some time agitated that distracted city; and as the rest of Switzerland, in its state of profound tranquillity, offers, within this period, no other incident worthy of the notice of the historian; it will perhaps not be deemed altogether foreign to the subject of the present chapter, to enter into a succinct narrative of the origin and termination of that bold attempt on the peace-

4. Henzi's
conspiracy
at Berne.

CHAP. IX. ful government of a prosperous and flourishing state.

(1744.) Berne being at peace with all its neighbours, afforded scarcely any opportunities of exertion to the aspiring and turbulent spirits within its bosom, who in every state are ever ready to avail themselves of the most trivial incidents in order to create disturbances. The government made a strict and salutary law to prevent the seats in the council being disposed of for pecuniary considerations. A libel appeared against one of the counsellors, who had strenuously opposed this edict, which the magistrates ordered to be burnt by the common hangman ; but regardless of this public censure, another lampoon of a much more sarcastic nature, was in the succeeding night stuck up against the town-house. Meanwhile the time approached for filling up the vacant seats in the council ; but on account of the variety of opinions that prevailed, the solemnity was postponed to another year. Some of the burghers delivered to the council a petition, in which they demanded the right of representation, and various reforms in the mode of electing into the council. This petition had already been signed by four-and-twenty citizens, when the senate was apprized of it, and immediately reported it to the council. The subscribers were all seized ;

seized ; some were banished out of the territories of the confederacy for ten years, some out of the canton of Berne for five years, and others were sentenced to a confinement of six months in their own houses. Among the former were Sinner, Wyss, and Koenig ; and among the latter Henzi and Samuel Koenig the younger, two men of superior talents, but not equally moderate in their projects. Henzi had commanded a company in the Duke of Modena's service, which had been reduced ; and he was now engaged in the banking trade. Amid the dust of his counting-house he read the Greek and Roman classics ; and it was he who familiarized the younger Koenig with the genius of Homer. The latter found relaxation in the beauties of poetry from the intense study of algebra. He published several tracts, both in verse and prose, some of which gave much offence. The political soon followed upon the literary delinquency ; and notwithstanding the interposition of several powerful protectors in the council, he and his brother Daniel, likewise an able mathematician, were driven into exile. Daniel died soon after, and Samuel became a professor in the university of Franeker. Captain Henzi passed the five years of his banishment at Neuchâtel : he wrote rhymes, odes, epigrams, *Misodemus*, and the *Messagerie du*

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Pinde After his return to his native city, his enthusiasm urged him irresistibly to share in a conspiracy, the object of which was, to revive the ancient municipal immunities; to remove the magistracy, and to appoint a new one in a general assembly of the burghers; to dismiss the seizeniers, and to elect for the future the magistrates in the tribes, in the same manner as was practised at Zurich and Basle; and lastly to appoint a dictator for the execution of this project. The conspirators agreed moreover to seize the arsenal, and to carry about them secret weapons; to put to death all those who should refuse to join in the attempt; in case of any troops approaching to protect the magistrates, to blow up their houses; and that this project should be carried into execution on the next thirteenth day of July.

The plot, long before it was ripe, was betrayed to the government by an ecclesiastie. Henzi, who, being less sanguine than the rest, and doubting the success of the enterprise, had absented himself from the city, was overtaken, brought back, and committed to close confinement: many of the principal conspirators were likewise seized; a few escaped; and only one of them, Emanuel Feuter, offered resistance. An advocate was, according to the established custom, appointed to defend their cause.

Watteville de Landshut* pleaded in favour of CHAP.
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Henzi and two others. His extenuation of the offence, his manner of accounting for the rashness of the culprits, his appeal to the commiseration of the judges, and fervent prayer for a mitigation of the punishment, or at least to moderate the tortures of the rack, exhibited a piece of energetic eloquence, on which authors, seemingly with great justice, have bestowed the highest encomiums.—‘ Surely,’ he concluded his pathetic pleading, ‘ the speedy, sincere, and voluntary confession of the prisoners must excite your compassion. Justice, no doubt, demands their punishment ; but your charity will exempt them from excruciating torments : all the world will applaud such lenity ; and they will themselves with their last breath extol your generous forbearance. A great part of the chastisement they already experience, is their bitter contrition for having offended so humane a magistracy. At this moment they are prostrate on the ground, and cry aloud, “ O God, forgive us ! ” They implore your compassion, not for their lives, but for an easy death. They recommend to you their wretched wives and helpless infants ; these are guiltless : be you the parent of the

* The author of the History of Switzerland mentioned in our preface.

‘ widow

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‘ widow and the orphan, as you are the fathers
‘ of the people. These disconsolate families
‘ crave that they may be allowed to bestow
‘ christian burial on the remains of their un-
‘ happy relatives. May the Almighty bless
‘ your administration ! may it ever be buried
‘ in oblivion, that within these walls citizens
‘ rebelled against their parental government !
‘ —Display your magnanimity, my lords, by an
‘ act of clemency. Mercy on the guilty crimi-
‘ nals ! mercy on their innocent relicts and pro-
‘ geny ! once more and for the last time, mer-
‘ cy ! oh, mercy !’

On the sixteenth of July, sentence of death was passed on the three heads of the conspiracy." Henzi met his fate with uncommon fortitude. Six accomplices were soon after banished out of the territories of the confederacy: three who had fled were ordered, in case they

" Meiners, t. i. p. 332. names the three convicts who suffered, Henzi, Emanuel Fueter, and Wernier; but the principal conspirators, he asserts, were Kuhn, a tanner, Dan. Fueter, a silversmith, and Gabriel Fueter, a merchant. The last, he says, was the chief conductor of the plot. The same author laments the fate of Henzi, whom he represents as a man of abilities and character, but who had taken offence at being refused the office of librarian to the republic. D. and G. Fueter, he adds, were after some years exile, pardoned; and when he wrote his account, were living peaceably at Berne.

returned,

returned, to be executed ; and meanwhile their effigies were affixed to the gallows. The widow of Henzi, with her two sons, embarked on the river : on stepping out of the boat at the confines of the Helvetic territories, she said to those around her, ‘ here are my two sons, on whom I dote : were I not certain that they will one day revenge the death of their father, I would drown them this instant in the river.’ One of these sons obtained, by means of professor Koenig, the friend of his father, a commission in the Dutch guards : the manner in which he executed the vengeance enjoined him by his mother, was by continually aiding his countrymen, who stood in need of his assistance. Some years after the conspiracy, many of the exiles obtained their unconditional pardon.¹

¹ The candid observer above quoted, (vol. iii. p. 224. n. 7) in whom the writer of this narrative is inclined to place much confidence, has been pleased to add the following circumstances to those contained in the text. ‘ Meiners has omitted to mention the well attested fact, that the peasants of the neighbourhood of Berne, as soon as they heard of the conspiracy, came in crowds, and armed, to the gates of the city, in support of the government ; that it was with much difficulty the magistrates succeeded to appease them ; and that they did not disperse, till they were promised that speedy and exemplary punishment should be inflicted on the delinquents. Among Fueter’s papers was found a list of the members of the government who were to be assassinated. Henzi was an enthusiast, whose extravagance bordered

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Troubles,
at Geneva
appeared
in 1768.

The practice of assembling the citizens of Geneva according to their military distribution into companies, and of these companies chusing delegates for conducting their joint concerns, had during the late troubles become prevalent; and had now given to the popular party much consistency and influence. Hence the danger of maintaining within the republic an armed and ever-active democracy, which would inevitably break out in incessant commotions, having become equally obvious and alarming, a clause was inserted in the last edict, which strictly prohibited such dangerous assemblies. Soon after however, the necessity of communication, and of friendly intercourse, introduced the establishment of clubs, in which political discussions became still more frequent; and by an easy correspondence between them, facilitated the propagation of democratic principles. This gave still greater energy to the spirit of liberty, or as the magistrates perhaps more properly called it, of insubordination, which, had it become necessary to curb it, would evidently have yielded to nothing short of arbitrary and irresistible authority.

‘bordered upon madness. Du Crest perhaps had not so great a share in the plot as has been represented: he may have instigated a few; but his means were greatly circumscribed.’

The

The invidiousness of being the first aggressors, had for a time repressed the ardour of the most violent agitators, who now again strove to inflame the minds of the people. The Spanish troops moreover, which had now taken possession of Savoy, engrossed for a while the attention of the Genevese, and turned away their minds from their own political concerns. Soon after, the city had the satisfaction of seeing all its former contests with the house of Savoy completely terminated by a treaty, which accurately determined the boundaries, and in which the court of Turin solemnly renounced all claim to the Vidamy, and acknowledged Geneva as a free, sovereign, and independent republic. A treaty of demarcation was likewise concluded with France: the state was liquidating and paying off the moderate debts it had contracted; and all things seemed at this period to co-operate towards its prosperity. Hopes were entertained that the two last edicts had finally settled the constitution on so solid a basis, as to preclude all future doubts and contentions: but the increase of wealth, which successful industry had gradually accumulated among the inhabitants, necessarily gave a bias to their morals, and kept alive a spirit of competition which could not suffer this republic to enjoy many years of tranquillity.

1754.

(1754.)

The

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The demagogues soon had an opportunity offered them, of arraigning the conduct of the magistrates, in consequence of a sentence issued by the council against two works of J. J. Rousseau ; his *Emile*, in which passages were found derogatory to the christian religion ; and his *Contrat Social*, in which the most unlimited democracy meets with a warm encomium. The council at the same time determined that if Rousseau, who had then fled from Paris on account of these very publications, should come to Geneva, his person should be seized, and brought before the magistrates to be dealt with as should to them seem proper. Rousseau being apprized of this decree, retired into the mountains of Neuchattel, whence he corresponded with his friends at Geneva, who presented a memorial in his favour, complaining, not so much of the censure upon the two works, which had been condemned in France, all over Swisserland, and in several other countries, as of the informality of the decree. The answer of the magistrates not being satisfactory, the number of the discontented increased, and they made fresh remonstrances. A profusion of statements, answers, rejoinders, and other publications, soon converted this private dispute into a public contest ; the popular party insisting that the case ought to be referred to the
general

general assembly. This led to a discussion of the important question, whether the senate or council had the right of withholding from the general assembly, by a simple negative, any proposal or remonstrance of which the citizens might demand the discussion. The debates were endless; and many powerful arguments were adduced in favour of both sides of the question. It may be conceived how earnest each disputant was in support of his opinions, since this discussion gave rise to two virulent parties, which, completely waving the original subject of the contest, for many years after divided the city, under the names of the *negatifs*, being the magistrates and their partizans, who maintained a right in the senate and council of suppressing the representations of the citizens, instead of laying them before the general assembly; and of the *representans*, or the popular party, which strenuously contended against this right.

It seemed now, as if these two factions had resolved to weary each other with remonstrances and refusals. Among the multitude of fugitive pieces, appeared the 'Letters from the Country,' ascribed to the attorney-general Tronchin, which were immediately answered by the 'Letters from the Mountain,' in which Rousseau combated with great vehemence, and his usual

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usual glow of eloquence, the arguments in favour of the negative right, and inflamed the minds of the abettors with indignation and resentment. Thus exasperated, the greater number resolved to reject the candidates offered for the syndicature of the ensuing year. No election being made, the former syndics were by the senate continued in office. This became a new, and an important object of contention. The interference of the mediators was again demanded by the magistrates, and their plenipotentiaries arrived without delay. The citizens were called upon to elect in their clubs, four-and-twenty deputies, to assist at the deliberations, and urge their claims. While the conferences were carrying on, the magistrates obtained from the mediators a declaration approving their conduct in the late contest. The citizens took offence at this premature decision. A plan of a reconciliation was presented to the
1766 general assembly on the fifteenth of December; but the citizens thought themselves too disdainfully treated to acquiesce in what was demanded of them. The plan was rejected by a great majority of votes.

The mediating powers immediately recalled their deputies. The French court, pretending to be highly offended at the obstinacy of the representants, sent troops to form a cordon on
the

the frontiers, and prohibited all intercourse with the Genevese of the popular party : and even the communication with the cantons was restricted by the formality of passports. The plenipotentiaries having been ordered to re-assemble at Soleure, declared that the magistrates of Geneva were under the immediate protection of their respective sovereigns, and digested a plan of accommodation, which they proposed to the magistrates and the citizens.¹³ It was received with cool indifference : the representants convinced that the mediating powers would content themselves with a mere display of apparent censure and empty menaces, became the more united and firmly tenacious of the principles they had adopted ; and actually terrified the senate with threats of a most alarming nature. They seemed to have felt what Rousseau afterwards expressed to one of their leaders, ' that those who know how to die, will ever be free ! ' Without pretending to decide between the two contending parties, it must be acknowledged that on this occasion, harassed at home, and surrounded by dangers

¹³ This plan, under the name of the *prononcé*, became the subject of much investigation and debate. It appears to have been, not a new project, but an explanatory decision of the points in contest, framed by virtue of the act of guaranty annexed to the pacification of the year 1738.

from

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from abroad, the citizens displayed a firmness worthy of a high-minded and generous people. The prospect of impending calamities of a most disastrous nature, induced the aristocratic party to yield ; and without the interference of the guarantees, a pacification was agreed upon, which proved highly satisfactory to the citizens, as it placed the magistrates entirely in their dependance. This important act of reconciliation was accepted and confirmed in the general assembly on the eleventh of March, and forms another memorable epoch in the history of this convulsive state. By this agreement the general assembly, waving the absolute power they had claimed of refusing to elect into the magistracy whenever they thought themselves aggrieved, obtained the right of naming one half of the members of the great council, and of displacing annually when they saw cause, four members of the senate, who after a second exclusion were no longer eligible into that body. This latter privilege was named the right of *re-election*, and appears to have been retained by the citizens to counter-balance the negative power in the magistrates, whereby they might refuse to deliberate on, or propose any question brought before them, which they might deem of a pernicious tendency ; which power had not been restricted
in

in the edict. Many senators as well as counsellors, conceiving the new regulations to be highly prejudicial to the welfare of the republic, being extorted by tumults and violence, and likely to introduce all the evils of an unlimited democracy, abdicated their offices; and even many of the more respectable citizens, viewing the edict in the same light, ceased to frequent the general assemblies.

The popular party had scarcely obtained this victory when a new storm burst forth, arising from the discontents of a class of the people which till then had been allowed no share in the affairs of government. The *natives*, who though established in the city for many generations, were still, as long as they continued in that class, debarred from all public functions in the state,¹⁴ and had at this time become nearly as numerous as the citizens and burghers, did not hear the incessant din of 'political equality,' and 'the rights of the people,' continually repeated, and enforced by the specious arguments and impressive eloquence of Voltaire, Rousseau, and their numerous disciples, with-

6. Insurrection of the Natives in 1770.

¹⁴ They were however far from being wholly excluded, the admission into the burghership having been conceded to them, under certain easy conditions, by the popular edict of the year 1768.

out

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out perceiving that they also might claim some share in these rights, and this equality; and that at least they ought to be freed from some of the humiliating shackles that restrained their industry, and degraded their condition. During the struggles between the magistrates and the citizens, each party had alternately countenanced the pretensions of this class of inmates, to prevent their siding with the opposite faction: but these no sooner perceived that in the late edict of reconciliation, framed by the chiefs of the popular party, no regard whatever had been paid to their demands, than their murmurs became loud; and they shewed a determined resolution to shake off their disgraceful trammels. Without any fixed plan, without leaders, and without support, they imprudently imitated the example of the citizens, not doubting that these, consistently with their own principles, would espouse their cause. They did not scruple to brave the authority of the magistrates in a manner so nearly bordering upon sedition, that coercive measures were found indispensably necessary. They incurred the suspicion of audacious enterprises to subvert the state, of which however none were ever convicted. This nevertheless afforded to the citizens a fair pretence to arm: An encounter

counter took place on the fifteenth of February, in which the magistrates, and citizens who had sided with them, prevailed, and some of the natives perished. Eight of the latter, who were suspected of being the chief instigators, were banished; and several others withdrew of their own accord. The general assembly had proceeded against the exiles without any form of trial: but their illegal severity was compensated by a liberal edict, in which the natives obtained various immunities, which materially improved their political existence.

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1770.

In the last conciliatory edict,¹⁵ the publication of a code of the existing laws had been once more demanded, and formally conceded; but the two contending parties, (which though ostensibly reconciled, still preserved their inveterate rancour) found in this article new causes of strife and animosity. The negatives bearing with impatience the law which had been dictated to them, and still more its effect in driving from the senate and council those whom they deemed the most meritorious magistrates, thought they perceived in the importunity for a written digest, the compilation and due promulgation of which was attended with innumerable difficulties, a persevering design to

7. Troubles
appeared in
1782.¹⁵ Of the year 1769.

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lower the dignity and abridge the power of the magistracy. The council therefore, where the negatives had a decided majority, found means, by a procedure in which the citizens perceived a great deal of unfairness, to rescind this article of the edict ; or at least by the suppression of a committee named jointly by the senate, council, and assembly, for the purpose of selecting and arraigning this code, to render that clause ineffectual, and the steps taken in consequence of it wholly nugatory.¹⁶

1779.

The clamours excited by this measure, which, if not unconstitutional, was at least highly impolitic, soon became too loud and prevalent to admit of a hope that they might be allayed without the interference of the guarantees : and the magistrates accordingly called upon France, Zurich, and Berne, to defend the laws they had sanctioned in one of the former treaties.¹⁷ They likewise omitted no means to strengthen their cause by the accession of the natives, many of whom were already prejudiced against the citizens, by the resistance the latter

¹⁶ There are those who assert that the magistrates never refused the compilation and promulgation of the code ; but that they opposed the revisal and interpretation of it, which the popular party demanded. The committee, we are assured, was not dissolved till after it had completed the digest which was afterwards printed.

¹⁷ Of the year 1738.

had

had offered to the extension of privileges, to which they thought themselves reasonably entitled. Others, at the same time, thought it more natural for them to unite with the representants, who, as advocates for an extension of civil liberty, could not in the end but be more inclined, and had actually promised, to favour their pretensions. Hence arose a division even among this class of the people, which was the source of still greater confusion and animosity. The minds of all ranks were now so exasperated against each other, that every cause of suspicion, even the most trifling incident of altercation, threatened an explosion, the event of which none could predict or hope to remedy. On the fifth of February, a private quarrel between two opposite parties of natives brought on a general insurrection, which the syndics were endeavouring, and had nearly succeeded to suppress, when accidentally an encounter took place at the arsenal whither a number of the negatives had resorted, in which one of the natives was killed, and another wounded. This the representants considered as the signal of general insurrection. They took up arms, and without meeting with any opposition, occupied the principal avenues of the city. They named a committee which, as a preliminary step towards strengthening their

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party,

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party, framed an edict, whereby various privileges were to be conferred on the natives and inhabitants, and not less than one hundred of the former were to be admitted into the class of burghers. This edict, which had been drawn up in four-and-twenty hours, amidst the din of arms, with the city gates shut, and with every circumstance of violence and sedition, was sanctioned by the three branches of the government; though without the concurrence of the negatives, most of whom had absented themselves from the meetings, being well apprised that their dissent would be over-ruled by the prevalence of the popular party. This secession furnished soon after a pretence for annulling the edict; and thus roused the citizens, and yet more the natives, to such a degree of fury and resentment, that no remedy but the armed interference of the mediating powers, it was now evident, could possibly prevent an abundant effusion of blood.

Meanwhile the refined policy of the cabinet of Versailles, feeling that its joint guarantee with Brune and Zurich would ever operate as a check upon the vigorous measures they were inclined to pursue in support of the aristocratic party at Geneva, resolved to free themselves from those shackles; and accordingly M. de Vergennes in two letters, both of the twenty-

fourth of September, the one to the cantons of Zurich and Berne, and the other to the senate of Geneva, declared that the king his master renounced the guarantee; adding however that in so doing he would not withhold his protection from the republic, but still reserve to himself the power of controlling the disturbers of the public tranquillity, and of maintaining the constitution.¹⁸ The two cantons upon this

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¹⁸ The art with which M. de Vergennes' letter to the two cantons is written, will, we trust, apologize for its insertion here, as a diplomatic curiosity.

' I have laid before the king your letter of the 20th ult.
' By persevering in your refusal to adopt the only means
' which his majesty thought adequate to prepare the pacifi-
' cation of Geneva, you have rendered it necessary for him
' to examine anew all that he had done, without effect, to-
' wards establishing with you a concert of opinions and mea-
' sures, that might put a stop to the troubles of that city.

' His majesty has been struck with your constant opposi-
' tion to his views; and has persuaded himself, that this
' contrariety of sentiments among the guarantees has greatly
' contributed to increase the troubles of Geneva.

' The last letter you addressed to me, published with an
' affectation of candour in that city, has confirmed the king
' in his opinion. It has presented to him a series of para-
' doxes, clashing entirely with the established ideas concern-
' ing the duties implied by the mediation, and which only
' tend to place in a false light the whole conduct of H. M.
' concerning Geneva, and a discussion of facts which never
' existed. It has proved to H. M. that you were less than
' ever disposed to appreciate all that he has done and pro-
' posed to do in favour of Geneva, and of yourselves.

' The

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likewise withdrew their guarantee ; and many of the representants vainly imagined that their

‘ The king is not disposed to enquire into the causes which have induced you to misinterpret the principles which have guided him, and the circumspection with which he has constantly conducted himself in this affair. He sees cause to apprehend that the prejudices and passions which agitate Geneva, have penetrated into your councils ; and his friendship for you induces him to withhold all that may tend to strengthen them. H. M. convinced that it is henceforth impossible that his union with you should afford any facility towards pacifying Geneva, has ordered me to declare to you, that he considers himself as released from all the engagements he entered into with you in the year 1738, for the guarantee of the government of that city ; and that he will never more claim your concurrence towards the execution of that treaty. He notifies this resolution to the republic. This new order of things will thus leave you fully at liberty to adopt whatever means you may think conducive towards terminating the troubles of Geneva. H. M. by committing to your wisdom so important a concern, feels conscious that he adds to the many proofs he has given you of his confidence and regard. But you are no doubt aware that the king has always been solicitous not to suffer the government of Geneva to degenerate into a tumultuous democracy ; and you are too enlightened not to perceive that, should you countenance such a revolution, you will compel H. M. to oppose the oppression of a party that demands the support of the ancient government, and that ought to have relied upon the concurrence of the three guarantees for its maintenance.

‘ Freed from an engagement, of which experience has twice proved the inefficacy, H. M. resumes the right he has of watching over the fate of Geneva, according as his
prudence,

cause would be materially benefited by this dereliction; conscious that, if left to themselves, the superiority of their numbers could not fail to insure them success.

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In the night succeeding the eighteenth of March, some of the populace assembled without any known provocation, set fire to a wooden building, and in the confusion this gave rise to, called the citizens to arms. The natives, and the most violent among the representants, instantly assembled in a tumultuous manner, seized and confined a few of the magistrates and the principal negatives, and detained them as hostages against the coercive measures they expected at the hands of the neighbouring powers, who, notwithstanding the renunciation of the guarantee, they were sure would be called in by the aristocratic party, in support of their inflexible adherence to their austere principles. This was the crisis the French minister was expecting in order to interfere in the affairs of Geneva without any restriction from co-mediators. He marched

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‘prudence, his dignity, and the interest of his crown may require. His earnest wishes are that you may succeed in quieting that republic in a manner that he may never have occasion to advert to its concerns, except when opportunities may offer of giving it proofs of his friendship and protection. I am, &c.’

troops

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troops towards the city; and prevailed upon Savoy, without any tie of alliance, to do the same. Berne, aware of the impolicy and danger of suffering those two powers to give laws to, and perhaps reduce, a city which was ever considered as a key to its territories, advanced likewise some forces, though reluctantly, and not till after various admonitions to adjust their differences without the interference of foreign powers, to co-operate with the others in restoring, as was pretended, tranquillity in that distracted republic. Zurich, not being so immediately concerned, prudently abstained from bearing a part in this invidious transaction.

On the approach of these troops, all the Genevans of the popular party, whom their leaders had inspired with a dangerous confidence in their own strength, and who were now joined by all the moderates who found themselves compelled to conform to the spirit of the times, shewed a firm resolution to defend their ramparts to the last extremity; and if at length compelled to yield, to fall under the ruins of their demolished habitations. They named a committee of safety, consisting of eleven members, who were to direct their operations; and displayed an appearance of serenity and fortitude, which daunted the negatives who still remained among them. Aided by their women and

and children, they laboured incessantly at their fortifications; a body of eighty of their Amazons is said to have put on uniforms, to have armed, and demanded a post of danger; children tore up the pavements in the streets, and conveyed the stones to the tops of houses, in order to harass those who might attempt to force a passage into the town. They animated each other by exhortations, by writings, and publications, among which, the *Lettre écrite des Ramparts de Geneve* breathed a spirit of heroism, and patriotic devotedness, of which instances in history are by no means frequent.¹⁸ Many no doubt thought that their valour, and the rectitude of their cause, would ultimately prevail: but the more moderate among them have since acknowledged, that so far from expecting to repel the united efforts of the three powers, each of which was more than competent to crush their diminutive state, all they hoped for was that, by a vigorous exertion of a few days, they might recommend themselves to honourable terms, and save themselves from the imputation of rash audacity.

Things were in this state of frantic effervescence, when on a sudden, at the moment

¹⁸ This letter, it is said, was not published till after the surrender of the city: if so, it may well be considered as a mere ostentatious vaunt.

when

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when an answer was to be given to the summons of the three hostile generals, the committee of safety, aware that if what they meant to propose were laid before the people at large, it would drive them into an excess of fury and resentment, demanded a deputation of one hundred, with whom they might confer on matters of more than ordinary importance. To this deputation, which met on the first of July, they most unexpectedly opened the project of surrendering the city, alleging in long and studied speeches, that after all their efforts, their fortifications were by no means in a condition to repel a first attack, much less to endure a siege; and that the consequences of being reduced by an assault, were too tremendous to leave matters to the hazard of such an issue. On hearing the word *surrender*, a cry of horror and execration pervaded the whole assembly. Many of the deputies attempted to sally forth, in order to apprise the people of this treacherous cowardice, but were prevented by some of the leaders, who bolted the doors. Some abatement of the tumult soon after enabled the committee to put the question of the surrender to the vote, and a great majority decided against it. Many of the deputies upon this, secure in the event of the debate, withdrew; and the committee, seeing the fervour

of those who remained considerably abated, found a pretence for renewing the deliberation. After many pathetic representations of the misery that would inevitably attend their persisting in a fruitless resistance, and a plausible project of seeking freedom and tranquillity in distant countries, it was agreed at midnight, that the magistrates who had been detained as hostages should be released; that the officers be recalled from their posts; that the keys of the city be sent to the syndics; and that those of the popular leaders who knew themselves to be most obnoxious to the aristocratic party, should instantly provide for their own safety by flight.

No words can describe the rage and consternation that prevailed throughout the city when this inglorious surrender was announced to the people. Multitudes resolved to abandon their devoted city. The lake and the roads were crowded with emigrants. Most of the leaders who had deserted the cause, having embarked on the lake, were fired at by their exasperated countrymen. The gates were thrown open, and the Piedmontese under Count Marmora, who first entered the city in the morning, found in it only a small number of sullen and dejected inhabitants.¹⁹ The two other commanders

¹⁹ Meiners pretends to have ascertained the fact, that the Berners were the first who entered the city.

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soon after made their entry, accompanied by most of the negatives who had taken refuge in their camps. The government was re-established: the edict of the representants, which conferred the burghership on above a hundred natives, was repealed: the citizens were disarmed: and in order to dispel the gloom this degrading humiliation must have diffused among the people, a theatre was established, and the return of peace was celebrated by a variety of entertainments, and all manner of festivity.

An edict was now prepared for new modelling the constitution, which having been approved at Versailles, Turin, and Berne, was proposed to the general assembly, from which the representants, who had taken up arms, and who still far exceeded the number of their opponents, were excluded; and it was there, on the twenty-first of November, adopted, not however without a considerable minority against it.

This new constitution annulled all the privileges the citizens had obtained by the preceding edicts.²⁰ It restored the power of electing the magistrates, lately assumed by the general assembly, to the senate and council. The pri-

²⁰ Particularly that of the year 1768.

privilege of remonstrating was taken from the people, and transferred to thirty-six adjuncts, chosen indeed from among the citizens, but so limited in their powers, as to be held up to the derision even of those in whose favour they were authorized to exert their influence.²¹ The circles or clubs, were prohibited; the city militia was abolished, the guard of the city being committed to a garrison of one thousand foreigners, commanded by a colonel and a major, both likewise foreigners; and taxes were imposed without the approbation of the general assembly. This edict, though highly conducive to strengthen the aristocracy, did not however altogether gratify the party of the negatives, who now incessantly felt the influence of the mediating powers, especially of France; from which quarter they have at length experienced their final annihilation. The greatest blame however, in this unhappy disturbance, is, by the most impartial writers, ascribed to the representatives, who, not contented with the important privileges they had obtained by a former edict,²² namely, the right of re-election, by which in time the whole senate must have been of their nomination, and that of filling up one half of

²¹ Their power of control was so insignificant, that they were in general called *les images*.

²² Of the year 1768.

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the vacancies in the council; they, eager to grasp immediately at the power of which they had a remote indeed, but certain prospect, precipitated measures, and hastened the destruction of the constitution they meant to perpetuate.

2. Revolution in
1789.

Although the aristocracy, after having obtained this signal victory, conducted themselves with great moderation, and by the strictest impartiality in the administration of justice, and the most cautious frugality in the public expenditure, by repeated acts of beneficence, and singular condescension in their general deportment, displayed an earnest solicitude to conciliate the affections and confidence of the people, and to obliterate the remembrance of their late discomfiture: yet the manner in which the last edict had been obtruded upon the citizens; the introduction of a strong and well disciplined garrison, consisting of, and even commanded by foreigners; the extensive barracks, evidently calculated for coercion rather than security; the manifest tendency of an established theatre to divert the minds of the people from the contemplation of their degraded condition; and perhaps above all, the consciousness of their diminished independence as a state; all these were co-operating and ever-galling motives of dissatisfaction and rancour, which no arguments could invalidate, and no palliatives could soften.

While Vergennes, the champion of liberty in America, and its bitterest enemy at Geneva, survived, none dared publicly to avow these discontents, being well aware that further struggles would infallibly terminate in still greater severity, and most probably in the final subjugation of their degraded commonwealth: but no sooner had this crafty, and in the end, most impolitic minister, closed his pernicious career, and Necker, the constant abettor of the popular party in his native city, been again admitted into the cabinet of Versailles, than the sanguine hopes of the demagogues once more revived; while the confidence of the ruling party abated in proportion as new storms were seen to threaten their political horizon. Things however hung yet awhile in an anxious suspense, and a precarious tranquillity might perhaps have been preserved some time longer, had not an incident, trivial in itself, and no wise affecting the small remnant of privilege still retained by the people, suddenly roused the turbulent passions, which led to another convulsion, and in its turn subverted the last repugnant and ephemeral constitution.

It is one of those just retributions, instances of which incessantly occur in the progress of society, that the very means which are devised for pernicious ends, ultimately produce effects which

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which tend to defeat those very purposes. The theatre, which had been established with a view to enervate the minds of the people, became the scene of the first explosion which struck at the newly erected authority of the magistrates. A youth of one of the most considerable families became enamoured of a young actress, whose beauty and talents had recommended her to the favour of the public; and his relations alarmed at the danger of such a connection, procured a peremptory order for her removal. On her last appearance, an uproar was raised in the theatre by some of the friends of her admirer, which the magistrates found much difficulty in quelling; and which, though apparently subdued, broke out anew on the next and some succeeding nights, until, by what was deemed a despotic interference, three young men of distinguished families, who had been chiefly concerned in raising the tumult, were apprehended and sentenced, two of them to one month's, and the third to a fortnight's close imprisonment; and the theatre was for a time ordered to be shut.

This exertion of authority occasioned loud murmurs, and an unanimous concert among the people not to visit the theatre when the representations were again suffered to proceed: but the symptoms of discontent which mostly alarmed

alarmed the ruling party, was an intention manifested by the citizens to set aside the four syndics at the next annual confirmation of the magistracy, when, in fact, it was only by virtue of the last edict that they remained in office, only five-eighths of the voters having declared against them, whereas three-fourths were now required to operate an exclusion.

Notwithstanding this irritation among the people, it is possible that, had no other incident happened to rouse their resentment, this disturbance might yet have gradually subsided into a long interval of tranquillity: but unhappily, to an uncommon severity of the season which greatly distressed the poorer classes, it was found necessary to add an increase in the price of bread, not only on account of the failure of the preceding harvest, but also because the inhabitants of the neighbouring districts, where the price had already been raised, came in crowds to Geneva, to purchase bread at a cheaper rate than they could obtain it at home. This order was announced on the twenty-sixth of January, and immediately occasioned a numerous concourse, which proceeded to some acts of violence against the bakers who had no longer any bread to sell at the former price. The next day a multitude assembled in the district of St. Gervais, divided from the great town

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by the Rhone, seized on a carriage which as usual was bringing bread for their consumption, and after a severe scuffle, in which a young man no ways concerned in the affray was inadvertently shot by the soldiers, drove away the guard that escorted it. The magistrates now ordered the garrison to quell the riot; but on the troops approaching the two bridges, they were not only detained by strong barricades raised across them, but also repelled by fire-arms, stones, and even by boiling water, poured upon them from two fire-engines brought out for the purpose. In a conflict that ensued at one of the gates of St. Gervais, a woman of some distinction, who came to the window with her child in her arms, was unfortunately killed by a random shot from the military; and in the progress of the uproar, one captain, and some soldiers of the garrison, were killed, and several others, both officers and men, were severely wounded. The magistrates upon this, being daunted by so resolute an opposition, made all possible concessions: they reduced the price of bread to its former rate, promised a general amnesty, and released the few insurgents who had been apprehended in the morning. The next night was as calm, as if no disturbance whatever had happened in the course of the preceding day.

Notwithstanding this appearance of restored tranquillity, the magistrates perceived that their authority was not established upon so firm a basis as, after their last triumph, they had been willing to believe. They now experienced that their augmented garrison was not sufficient to contain the people when breaking out into open insurrection; and this consciousness soon prompted them to measures which singularly betrayed their fears and imbecility. They barricaded the streets where the principal families resided; and on the day when the young man and the woman, who had been accidentally shot by the soldiery, were to be buried, they ordered both the garrison and the artillery to hold themselves in readiness against any violence that might be offered. Exasperated at this appearance of compulsion and mistrust, the people once more flew to arms; drove the troops, many of whom went over to them, from their posts; took possession of the city gates; and so effectually intimidated the magistrates, that they readily accepted the terms offered them by the attorney-general in the name of the citizens, and on the ninth of February confirmed an edict, which once more new-modelled the form of their government.

By this regulation, which was solemnly ratified on the tenth of February by the general assembly,

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assembly, amidst great demonstrations of joy and mutual congratulation, all the rigours of the former edict were abolished. The elections were replaced upon the former footing; all natives of the fourth generation were admitted into the class of burghers; the number of the garrison was reduced to its former establishment; the clubs were restored; the powers of the thirty-six adjuncts were enlarged; the inhabitants of every class were allowed the use of arms; and all who had been banished in the former revolution were reinstated in their privileges. Thus a near approach was again made to absolute democracy: but not near enough to accord with the ideas of liberty which have since threatened to subvert all civil society. Both parties, as soon as they had recovered from the panic and intoxication which had agitated them in the hour of contest, thought they had been either too lenient in their demands, or too hasty in their concessions; and there were not men wanting who foreboded that another revolution was near at hand, which however, they hoped, might be effected without reiterated convulsions.

Such is the outline of the repeated disturbances which have agitated the people of Geneva during the present century: disturbances no less fatal to themselves, than pernicious to mankind

mankind in general, by the dangerous spirit they have been the means of diffusing very extensively around them, and of which, all Europe now feels the disastrous consequences. A circumstantial statement of the later periods of their history is scarce as yet practicable; the passions of individuals still operating in the contemplation, not only of the events themselves, but also of their causes, and the effects produced by them; and casting such a variety of shades upon incidents that may be deemed of the greatest notoriety, that the most industrious and dispassionate enquirers are frequently baffled in their most sincere endeavours to arrive at truth. This instructive inference however may be safely drawn from a collective view of those dissensions and insurrections; that, however detrimental an undue exertion of authority in monarchs and senates may often prove to certain individuals in a state; the evil consequence of an abuse of power in a people vainly striving to assume and to hold the reins of government, is far more dangerous in its nature, and extensive in its mischief, as it never fails to involve the whole community in the general anarchy and ruin it always tends to promote.

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*Dissolution of the Confederacy.*CHAP.
X.Origin of
the French
Revolution.

NO event in history will perhaps ever afford so much matter for speculation to moral, as well as political theorists, as the tremendous revolution, which has of late been spreading horror and devastation over the fairest part of Europe. The investigation of its origin and progress, whenever it can be entered into with the ample stock of materials, in which we shall yet awhile be deficient, will be attended with the greater difficulty, as no former conflict of a similar nature has probably ever called forth so many energies and virtues, or set loose such a variety of vices and destructive passions, as the convulsion we are doomed to witness. While a few attentive observers have laboured, with abundance of ingenuity, to trace the whole cause of the evil up to the pernicious efforts of a few miscreants, endowed with great genius, courage, and perseverance, but with a malevolence which could only be gratified by the miseries inseparable from anarchy and sedition; others have derived the calamity from the great change introduced

introduced within this century into the state of society, by the rapid influx of wealth from both the Indies, which, falling chiefly to the lot of the industrious, raised the lower classes nearer to a level with the superior orders; and by the improved cultivation of the mind, which insensibly introduced a spirit of enquiry, and a presumptuous arrogance, that gradually led men to over-rate the powers of reason, and unfitted them for the subordination, without which no government can possibly subsist. Many also have not scrupled to decide that a thorough change in the polity of Europe had become unavoidable, through the many glaring defects in most of the existing governments, rendered still more insupportable by the incapacity and mal-administration of those to whom the direction of affairs had been committed:

All these, no doubt, have some specious arguments in their favour: but posterity, whenever it shall explore the complicated maze of causes and effects which have brought on the eventful period we live in, will probably discover that many and various circumstances have co-operated to produce the evil. While the malignity of the first promoters of revolutionary principles will unquestionably be found to have been the prime and most efficient agent; it will be fair to calculate how far the torpor, inconsistency,

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inconsistency, and weakness of those who ought to have averted the storm, may have contributed to facilitate the operations of the agitators, who had conspired the downfall of all regular government. As seeds will germinate only in adapted soils; as, in investigating the powers of a machine, we calculate the reciprocal re-action as well as the force to be applied; so must we admit that the promoters of sedition, the dexterous artificers of ruin, have manifestly taken into the line of account, the very feeble resistance they were likely to encounter in the execution of their destructive plans. Future historians will probably estimate the pernicious effects of the puerile ambition and love of innovation, which at this momentous crisis actuated the first sovereign of Europe; the avowed irreligion of the great Frederick; and the wanton dereliction of all principle of the proud Semiramis of the north: they will duly appreciate the inordinate selfishness of these three potentates, and their mutual accord in a flagrant act of injustice,¹ which in a private individual would have been deemed an atrocious theft; which at once broke through the faith of treaties, and damped the confidence nations had till then placed in the law which governed their

¹ The partition of Poland.

relative

relative concerns. Future annalists will probably deduce from these and similar causes, an inevitable relaxation in the ties of reverence and loyalty which ought at all times to bind the people to their sovereign, and a political indifference which gave too free a scope to the disorganizers of our days, who were too keen and industrious not to avail themselves of the encouragement so profusely held out to them.

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In France the means of resistance were still more feeble than in other parts of the continent; and here, accordingly, the seeds of sedition first broke out into open insurrection. That country had patiently supported two long reigns of depravity and enormous profusion, which had so embarrassed its finances that the benevolent monarch who succeeded, unwilling to recur to the despotic means used by his two predecessors, loosened the reins of his government by demanding voluntary supplies, which his people would still have cheerfully granted, had not various concomitant circumstances damped their loyalty, and alienated their ardent zeal for the glory of their monarchs, for which that nation had been long eminently distinguished. Those to whom the administration of public affairs had been consigned were, for the most part, men destitute of the skill and vigour which the dangers of the times imperiously

CHAP. X. ously demanded. The glaring instances of depravity, moreover, not only winked at by the government, but even countenanced by the examples of those of higher ranks, and in conspicuous stations, had long since offended and alarmed even the well-disposed part of the nation, and greatly favoured the spirit of insubordination which gradually burst forth in all quarters. To this spirit the improvident Vergennes gave additional vigour by his most impolitic American war, which, while it authorized an open resistance to the established authorities, greatly increased the spreading evil by an additional derangement of the finances. All this, too, happened at a time when the popularity of the sovereign was greatly impaired by his frequent dissensions with his parliament, whom the people had accustomed themselves to look upon as their steady advocate, and whom repeated successes had taught to aim at further triumphs. Designing men were not wanting, who eagerly embraced the opportunity of accelerating the disturbances which they saw were now impending, and from which they had no doubt of deriving essential advantages. Aware that in order to arrive at their ends they must subvert the present system of society, they resolved to rouse the inferior classes by the fascinating cry of *liberty and equality*,

lity; which they well knew no labourer, no journeyman, no vagrant of idle propensities and vicious habits, would be disposed to suppress; and by a specious tender of a *representation in the government*, which men even of superior rank will often be inclined to favour, deeming it much more eligible to have an ostensible share in the administration of public affairs, than to adhere to the peaceful enjoyment of domestic comforts, and the improvement of their private fortunes by the honest arts of industry and economy.

Switzerland was situated too near, and was too closely connected with this nursery of sedition, not to be early infected by the spreading contagion. The cries of liberty, equality, and representation, were soon heard in many of the sequestered valleys, where harmony, peace, and prosperity had subsisted for ages. Its different governments, at the same time, were of too lenient and patriarchal a nature to afford the corrective means which the nature of the evil manifestly required; and hence arose, in various parts, a clamour that these governments were no longer adapted to the spirit of the times. Few, indeed, dared openly avow the charge of oppression against their rulers; the people throughout the country being armed, and the magistrates without a weapon but the love and confidence

State of
Switzerland.

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confidence of the people: no imputation therefore could surely be more false and injurious than that of the tyranny of an oligarchy, so incessantly proclaimed by the French agents and depredators. It must however be owned, that in some of the aristocratic cantons a certain inequality had taken place, which, though far from unjust or oppressive in its origin, did yet, in time, become vexatious to those who were stationed in the inferior ranks. At Zurich and Basle, for instance, where the citizens engrossed not only all the authority and emoluments of government, but even, to a certain degree, monopolized the best part of the profits of the industrious inhabitants of the country, the peasantry having once heard the cry of emancipation and equality, stood in little need of French emissaries to urge them to a claim of equal rights, to which they might well think, and they had before now intimated, that the services they had rendered to the state had given them a just title. Accordingly it was soon perceived that the peasants on the lake of Zurich, and in the rural districts of Basle, were preparing to be among the foremost in adopting a spirit of disaffection, and in advancing pretensions of a revolutionary tendency.

In the Pays de Vaud a similar spirit had been long since disseminated, but under some variety

variety of circumstances. The peasants, though far less industrious, and hence less opulent, than those of the German districts of the canton of Berne, were however abundantly satisfied with the protection they felt and acknowledged at the hands of their magistrates, whom they considered as, and often addressed by the endearing name of, the fathers : but among the gentry and citizens murmurs were heard, which the government slighted till it was no longer able to suppress them. Most of the latter were descended from refugees, who had quitted France at the repeal of the edict of Nantes. Among these, many were found who, emulous of being thought no less public-spirited and impatient of controul than their neighbours of Geneva, bore with restless indignation their exclusion from, or at least the great difficulty that obstructed their admission into, the higher offices of magistracy. These accordingly resolved to use all means they could devise, or that might be afforded them by foreign aid, to achieve their emancipation from the government of Berne, even at the price of their competent freedom, and the many domestic comforts they had long enjoyed in one of the most exhilarating regions upon earth : like one who, being affected by a temporary complaint in his extremities, relieves himself by the amputation of his limbs.

These

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These symptoms of rising disaffection might easily have been repressed, had the magistracies, in whose districts they manifested themselves, acted with the wisdom and unanimity necessary to invigorate their measures. There are abundance of incontestable proofs that the bulk of the people, conscious of their prosperous state, were firmly addicted to their venerable constitution and its administrators; and would have shewn the same zeal and heroism in its defence, of which they had given proofs at Morgarten, Sempach, and Næfels: but their rulers suffered partial views and selfish motives to influence their deliberations; and hence their councils became undecided, and their decrees fluctuating, and often contradictory. France, they knew, would declare in favour of the insurgents; and all those therefore who still received stipends, pensions, or annuities from that state, never failed to oppose every coercive expedient; while those, whose morals had been tainted, and patriotic ardour allayed, by the depravity of French manners, would, perhaps more from levity than sinister views, impede the measures that might have saved the commonwealth. Thus do we find in the conduct of these governments, particularly in that of Berne, where the interests of the French republic were most predominant, and whose resolves

solves chiefly influenced the cantons, a hesitation which destroyed all confidence; and an alternate recourse to severity and compliance, a practice of all others the most conducive to afford plausible pretences for complaint, and a reliance on the means of resistance. Some true patriots, and men of sound policy and undaunted courage, succeeded at times to excite a few paroxysms of vigour; but these were all of short duration, and generally succeeded by still greater examples of debility: and the inglorious pusillanimity of the whole tenor of their conduct, which they dignified by the name of moderation, soon convinced the French directory of the facility of the subjugation, which doubtless they had long meditated. The facts now to be related will afford an additional proof how effectually temporizing compliance, and servile timidity, will provoke accumulated insults, and accelerate the ruin of a desponding state.

The number of Swiss troops which had, ever since the treaty of subsidy between Lewis the Eleventh and the Helvetic body, been retained in the service of France, had, during the present century, in general amounted to about fourteen thousand men, distributed into eleven regiments, which, considering their acknowledged bravery, strict discipline, and inflexible adherence

Treatment
of the Swiss
Troops in
France.

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adherence to their engagements, were at all times looked upon as the flower of the French army. The earliest promoters of sedition viewed this steady phalanx with a suspicious eye, and one of their first attempts was to seduce them from their allegiance. They succeeded in a great measure with the regiment of Chateau-Vieux, at this time in garrison at Nancy; the greatest part of which mutinied, plundered their military chest, and shewed a disposition to desert their colours. Count Bouillé arrived in time to quell the tumult. Those who had been foremost in the revolt were seized, and, conformably with an article in their capitulation, were tried by their own officers. Twenty-two of them were sentenced to death, and forty-one, who had been convicted of the theft on the regimental chest, were condemned, and actually sent, to the galleys at Brest. The Jacobin party, unwilling that any one should suffer for disobedience or treason, and further prompted by their animosity against Bouillé and La Fayette, the latter of whom had incurred their enmity by his strict adherence to subordination and discipline, warmly espoused the cause of the convicts at Brest, and impetuously demanded their release; and in this they readily succeeded, in open violation of the treaties, according to which the sentences of the court-martial could

could only be repealed by the cantons. The party, at the instigation of the comedian Collot d'Herbois, caused the felons to be brought in triumph to Paris, introduced them, with shouts of congratulation and applause, into the legislative assembly, and even rewarded them as victims of despotic tyranny. The cantons, so far from resenting this outrage, did not even venture a remonstrance, or utter the least complaint.

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Whether the mode of seduction was found too tardy or altogether ineffectual, a different expedient was next adopted, which, in fact, proved more speedy and successful. The Bernese regiment of Ernst, the oldest, and one of the most distinguished in the line, was quartered at Aix in Provence. Although it had, in compliance with an order from the supreme council of Berne, taken the oath prescribed by the new constitution; yet, because it preserved order and discipline, and did not partake of the enthusiasm of the frantic multitude, it was generally considered as addicted to the aristocratic party. A numerous band of desperate Marsilians was dispatched to Avignon, where some anti-revolutionary plots were suspected to be in agitation. These ruffians were instructed to assail the regiment of Ernst in their way through Aix, and to deprive it of the means of

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impeding

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impeding the projected revolution. They arrived in this city on the twenty-fifth of February. The governor had previously commanded the regiment to retire into its barracks, which order was immediately obeyed. Notwithstanding this readiness to abstain from all interference in the concerns of the contending parties, the Marsillians declared that, unless the whole regiment surrendered its arms, and evacuated the town, they would instantly attack it, and proceed to any extremity if it offered the least resistance. Major de Watteville, the commanding officer, resolved to prevent the threatened carnage, which he was convinced could be productive of no beneficial purpose, and ordered the soldiers to lay down their arms. They immediately marched out of Aix in the same manner as the remnant of the legions of L. Cassius had formerly retired before the Tigurini, without a weapon except a simple staff. The regency of Berne immediately recalled the regiment, and wrote to the king to demand the arms, which were its property. They indeed, though in guarded terms, complained of the indignity offered to their nation; but no notice was taken of the remonstrance, although it was laid before the assembly at the king's recommendation.

Massacre
at the
Tuilleries.

These insults, however, were trivial when compared with the horrid massacre that was

soon

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soon after committed on the Swiss guards, while, true to their allegiance, and surrounded by defection, they were, with heroic intrepidity, defending the king, his family, and his palace, against the frenzy of a lawless multitude. The event of the tenth of August, in which, near eight hundred brave confederates, worthy of their gallant ancestors who fell on the cemetery of St. Jacob, perished in the faithful discharge of their duty, is of too public notoriety to be here dwelt upon. The few who escaped the slaughter in the Tuilleries were imprisoned, and afterwards butchered in the dreadful havoc of the second of September. Though many hundreds of Swiss families were, by this atrocious act, reduced to mourn the loss of some near friend or relative, yet not a murmur on the part of the Helvetic governments was heard in France, and not a step was taken to obtain even the semblance of redress: and so far was the French assembly from expressing any compunction for the unmerited aggression, that, ten days after the horrid carnage, they issued a decree, by which, regardless of the long established ties of friendship, of the many existing treaties, capitulations, and conventions, and without the least communication with the cantons on the subject, all the Swiss regiments, at that time in the service of France, were suddenly disbanded and sent home; without any

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indemnification for the heavy losses which many of the individuals sustained by this abrupt dismissal.

Perhaps it will appear incredible, and yet it is true, that notwithstanding these repeated and unexampled provocations, the Helvetic diet, at this time assembled at Arau, declared that they would stedfastly adhere to a strict neutrality between the contending parties. This neutrality, while it proved particularly detrimental to the combined armies, was of the greatest utility to France, as it not only secured a feeble frontier of upwards of sixty leagues against all foreign attack, but likewise preserved the only door the French had now left open to all the markets of Europe. How far it was conducive to the honour, safety, and even existence of the confederacy, the event has shewn.²

² It may be deemed a calamity, that a man so dextrous, so versatile, and possessed of qualities so specious as Barthelemy, should, at this time, have been the French minister in Switzerland. He no doubt made good use of the private interests of individuals to soften the resentment, which it is impossible the late atrocities should not have excited among the people. It may, moreover, be some extenuation of the feeble conduct of the Swiss governments, that they had some reason to entertain doubts of the unanimous co-operation of the people, had they been called to arms; and that in fact (what we here assert upon no equivocal authority) all the great powers of Europe, when they still believed in the great facility of crushing the French republic, strongly recommended

Meanwhile the revolutionary agents in the Pays de Vaud, perceiving the want of energy their government betrayed on most occasions, and that the complexion of the times was favourable to their designs, began to act with less circumspection, and publicly avowed sentiments and claims which, till then, no one had ventured to advance with the most distant view of obtaining redress. The leaders, however pernicious their principles may have been, were not men of common abilities and vigour. Clavières, a native of Geneva, who had been proscribed from that city in one of the revolutions in which the aristocracy prevailed, was now at Paris, immersed in the torrent of the revolutionary vortex, in which he soon after became one of the principal leaders, and an early victim.³ Nothing was neglected

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Fresh
Symptoms
of Disaffec-
tion in the
Pays de
Vaud.

commended to the Swiss to persevere in the neutrality, which the same powers afterwards loudly reprobated. Thus much is certain, that no offers of subsidies were made to the cantons, without which it was impossible for them to engage in a war of this magnitude; in which, at the critical moment of the siege of Lyons, and the precarious possession of Toulon by the allies, their co-operation might have been of the most decisive consequence.

³ He was minister of finances during Roland's administration; and on the expulsion of that faction, he, being in confinement, and hearing the names of those who were to impeach him, preferred the death of Cato to the horrors of a public execution, which he knew he could no longer escape.

by

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by this artful and indefatigable demagogue that tended to subvert, or any way disturb, the government which had contributed to the overthrow of the party he had abetted in his own republic : and through him and his associates, the disaffected in the Pays de Vaud received assurances of the concurrence and support of France in the plans they had concerted. Cæsar Frederic la Harpe of Rolle had been bred to the profession of the law ; but having failed of success in one of the first law-suits he had conducted before his municipal tribunal, he left his country in disgust, and repaired to Petersburg, where he was not only graciously received by the great Catherine, but even entrusted with a share in the education of two of her grandsons, and soon after promoted to the rank of colonel.⁴ His remote situation no ways prevented his fomenting the disturbances that were preparing in his native country : and such was the frequency and malignity of his correspondence, that the magistrates of Berne, who had thought it necessary to inspect his letters, extracted from them a delineation of his character, which they transmitted to the empress. This charge, however, he found means so effectually

⁴ It is well known that in Russia all promotions in the civil line are classed according to military rank. C. F. la Harpe never served in the army.

ally

ally to elude, that he was suffered to continue in his station till, the revolutionary conflagration having gained the upper hand in the west of Europe, he resolved to return to his native valleys;⁵ but being refused admission into the canton of Berne, he took up his residence on the contiguous territory of Geneva, and from thence organized the insurrections which ended in the subjugation of his country.⁶ Amadeus la Harpe of Yens, near Aubonne, a man of property and some weight in his vicinage, did not act so conspicuous a part as his last mentioned cousin of Rolle, having been earlier checked in his career. Being at his seat when the disturbance first broke out in the Pays de Vaud, which he on all occasions industriously promoted, he is known to have been the principal channel through which the distant co-operators, at Paris and Petersburg, conveyed the venom they meant to disseminate: being actually detected, he was one of the first who felt the effects of the desultory vigour which the government at times exerted.

The first explosion took place on the second

⁵ In 1794.

⁶ He became in the sequel one of the five of the Helvetic directory, which being found inadequate for the purposes of government, is now (January 1800) superseded by a provisional administration.

anniversary

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anniversary of the demolition of the Bastille,⁷ which Amadeus la Harpe caused to be celebrated with great festivity in many of the Helvetic towns on the lake of Geneva. The supreme council of Berne, being apprised of the spirit of disaffection that had manifested itself on this occasion, sent a special commission, attended by a force of three thousand men, to inquire into the causes of the murmurs, and to inflict punishment on those whom they should convict of seditious practices. The commissioners opened their court at Rolle. Whether the remonstrances the people had to make were really trivial, or whether the force attending the commission intimidated the discontented, no complaints of any consequence were here brought forward; and the tribunal had little else to do than to examine into the delinquency of several of the ringleaders, some of whom they confined in the castle of Chillon, and others they restrained by less severe punishments. Many fled from justice, and among these Amadeus la Harpe, who, having by this default incurred the penalties of high treason, was sentenced to suffer death in case he should return to the territories of the republic.⁸

⁷ July the 14th, 1791.

⁸ He entered into the French service; and having risen to the rank of general of division, was, through a mistake, killed by his own party at the passage of the Po, near Còdogno, in the year 1796.

The rest of Switzerland was as yet in a state of perfect tranquillity, when, war having been declared between the emperor and the French republic, one of the first operations on the part of the latter was, the taking possession of the district of Porrentrui. General Custine, towards the end of April, distributed six thousand men in the passes which opened, through this country, from the Brisgau into the French districts of upper Alsace. This most important part of the bishopric of Basle, did not indeed lie within the boundaries of the Helvetic territories; but the bishop, as a confederate, was authorized to demand the protection of the cantons; and at any rate it was to them a most alarming circumstance to see a French army in possession of the strongest posts on one of the least secure parts of their frontiers.

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French Armies approach the Frontiers.

Another French army approached soon after at a still more vulnerable part of the confines, where, disaffection having already spread its venom, it would be infallibly encouraged by the prospect of the vigorous support that might reasonably be expected from such powerful auxiliaries. General Montesquiou received orders to take possession of the duchy of Savoy. He was ostensibly directed to pay due respect to the neutrality of the Helvetic body, which order he, from inclination as well as duty, strictly

CHAP. ^X strictly obeyed : nor could it be considered as any infraction of this neutrality on the part of the Swiss that, this step being taken at the solicitation of the magistrates of Geneva, who, in order to guard against the insults they might well apprehend when contending armies were so near their gates, demanded a reinforcement from their confederates. The cantons of Zurich and Berne, towards the end of September, actually marched sixteen hundred men into this city : this act of vigour however, not being considered in the same impartial light by the French directory, their general advanced with avowed hostile intentions ; but soon after, with a moderation which was not likely to gratify the asperity of his superiors, he agreed to a convention. This agreement was signed on the twenty-second of October, and stipulated that the Swiss troops were to evacuate the city before the first of December ; upon which the French were likewise to withdraw within a certain distance of its gates.

No one was more indignant at this lenity than Clavieres, who now held the office of minister of finances at Paris, and who, besides aiming at the total overthrow of the present government at Geneva, harboured a particular animosity, even against this former party in that city, which, aware of the impending danger, had

had now cordially coalesced with the magistracy. Peremptory orders, issuing originally from him, were sent to the general to revoke the convention, and to pay no regard to the neutrality of the Pays de Vaud. Whether from motives of justice or humanity, or from some less commendable inducement, the commander remonstrated against the perfidious decree, and procrastinated, until a strict order came to his subordinate officers to seize him, and send him prisoner to Paris. This command he eluded by flight. Clavieres appears to have been in some measure pacified by the triumph he obtained on this occasion : he suffered his countrymen, by dismissing their Swiss auxiliaries, to fulfil the ruinous terms to which they had engaged themselves in the capitulation ; and then countenanced the emissaries, who, jointly with the French resident Servan, instigated a few of the natives to renew their claims of admission into the general assembly, and to raise a faint clamour, which soon became the pretence for the introduction of French troops, and a surrender of the independence of the city. This event, while it filled all ranks with horror and dismay, was represented to the directory as the cause of joy and exultation in the astonished citizens.⁹

⁹ A full and animated account of this iniquitous transaction has been published by Mr. D. Chauvet, in a tract entitled,

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The Can-
tons persist
in their
Neutrality.
1793.

While the French were dragging their last, and one of their best, monarchs to the scaffold, Brissot and his party, who probably saw that their usurped authority could only be protracted by an extensive foreign war, contrived the aggression of Holland, and consequently of England, and urged the necessity of either extorting from the Helvetic body another abject declaration of neutrality, or of carrying fire and sword into its peaceful regions; Clavieres at the same time, and some fugitives from the Pays de Vaud, actually digesting the plan of an invasion, and estimating the profits that would accrue to them from the plunder to be committed at Berne.¹⁰ Austria and Sardinia thought the measure of disgrace the Swiss had now sustained so full, that they had little doubt of the success of a proposal they at length made to the cantons to join the coalition; but the Swiss, knowing from long experience how little they could rely upon the promises of these courts, now, in their turn, resisted all the arguments that were suggested, and vainly flattered themselves that, by temporizing, they should still escape the conflagration that was spreading all around them. The author who appears

titled, 'Conduite du gouvernement François envers la république de Geneve.'

¹⁰ Memoirs of General Dumouriez, t. 1. chap. 10.

to have written with most impartiality on this subject,¹¹ with an inconsistency that cannot well be accounted for, gratuitously extols the wisdom of the Swiss government in persisting in this neutrality, while in the same page he adduces facts which evince the ruinous tendency of the measure. No alternative in the affairs of this nation was perhaps ever so critical and hazardous as the present: but this truth we may safely infer from the whole tenor of its conduct, that a people who will be free and independent, must rely wholly upon its own means of repelling unmerited aggression.

The intended blow (for it would equally have been inflicted notwithstanding the lowliness of the cantons) was for a time suspended; it is said, by the remonstrances of a member of the supreme council of Berne, who was then at Paris, and who, though without credentials, exerted himself to conciliate the forbearance of the directory. He delineated in lively colours, in an occasional tract,¹² the signal advantages

¹¹ Posselt, *Europ. annal.* 1798. No. 2.

¹² *Coup d'Oeil sur les relations politiques entre la Republique Francaise et le Corps Helvetique*, by Col. Weiss. The same author some time after published a pathetic exhortation to his countrymen under the title of *Réveillez vous Suisses, le danger approche*. The subject of this neutrality has been amply discussed by C. L. Haller, in an *Exposé historique des faits concernant la neutralité de la Suisse envers la France*: published in the year 1797.

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France derived from the neutrality of the Swiss, at a time when the united forces of nine foreign powers were pouring in upon its frontiers, and civil discord was sapping its very vitals; when the Vendée was in flames, and Lyons offered a resistance which, had it been seconded from the Alps, would no doubt have prevented the fall of Toulon, and perhaps detached the southern departments from the infant republic. His arguments gained general applause: Dumouriez seconded the powerful impression they made; and the general Desprez-Crassier, who commanded in the district of the Upper Rhine, received strict orders, 'to proceed with the greatest circumspection in all things relating to the Swiss; and to be particularly upon his guard against the false insinuations of intriguers, who were endeavouring to sow dissensions between them and the French republic.' Even Robespierre, addressing Col. Weiss, used the expression, 'the name of Swiss must be ever dear to all true Frenchmen, and is particularly so to me.' The fall of Lyons, which twenty thousand Swiss would inevitably have prevented,¹³ was in fact the critical period at

¹³ England, by virtue of the capitulations between Holland and some of the Helvetic states, had a right to accede to those treaties upon similar terms, and might have demanded the number of troops that would probably have performed this

which the French arms recovered the ascendancy, which has since for a time enabled an imperious directory to dictate laws to Europe.

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The brilliant success of the French arms in the campaign of the ensuing year, first removed the doubts the cabinets of Europe had till now entertained of the competency of the French rulers, to negotiate and conclude treaties.

Success of
the French.

1794.

Prussia was the first link the directory found means to detach from the chain of the coalition : but great obstacles presented themselves as to the mode of conducting the conferences, and the place where they should be carried on. The latter difficulty was obviated, by fixing upon the only neutral country accessible to the plenipotentiaries of both parties ; and, at Basle, the temporizing Barthelemy, seconded by the subtle tribune of Basle, Peter Ochs, of whom more will be said hereafter, brought about the first agreement between a monarch and the declared enemies to monarchy. This was soon after, and by the specious persuasions of the same agent, followed by a similar pacification between the regicides and the representative of the nearest branch of the royal house, whose chief they had led to the scaffold : and lastly,

1795.

this service. The British cabinet was apprized of the fact ; but it does not appear what use was made of the timely intelligence.

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one of the most considerable of the German princes accepted also of a reconciliation, which in the preceding year would have been held in the greatest abhorrence.¹⁴

1796.

Another campaign followed, in which the Austrians, after a series of discomfitures, obtained such signal advantages, as brought the armies, which had reached the frontiers of Austria and Bohemia, back to the Rhine, and obliged the Swiss to take vigorous steps for the preservation of their neutrality. In the months of September and October, general Moreau made his ever memorable retreat, in which several of his straggling parties having been driven towards the confines of the Helvetic states, demanded, and, notwithstanding the loud remonstrances and menaces of the Austrian generals, readily obtained, premission to proceed, through their territories, towards the frontiers of France; detached, indeed, in small numbers, and without arms or ammunition, but receiving all the relief their deplorable condition stood in need of. As concessions and friendly offices appear to have been the principal claims of the Swiss confederates to the outrages they had experienced from France,

¹⁴ The peace with Prussia was signed on the 5th of April; with Spain on the 22d of July, and with Hesse Cassel on the 25th of August.

these

these acts of humanity ought, no doubt, to be likewise inserted in the catalogue of their title deeds.

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The long protracted sieges of Kehl, and of the Tête de Pont at Huningen, rendered it necessary for the cantons to collect a force; and they actually formed a cordon on that frontier, where the near approach of numerous Austrian troops, elate with victory, and at all times addicted to plunder, afforded frequent causes of mutual complaints and recriminations. In the night of the thirtieth of November, one of the Austrian columns which had been ordered to storm an outwork at Huningen, mistook its way, and spread beyond the established line of demarcation. The clamours of Barthelemy upon this were loud and imperious. He taxed the Swiss officers who commanded the cordon with cowardice and base corruption; and the cantons, ever compliant with his peremptory mandates, immediately caused them to be arrested, and sentenced three of them to a long confinement. On the first day of the next month of February, the Tête de Pont of Huningen surrendered to the Austrians; but on the other hand the important city of Mantua, the bulwark of the Austrian power in Italy, yielded likewise, about the same time, to the victorious arms of Bonaparte. This intrepid commander,

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commander, by a sudden and most hazardous expedition, of which there is scarce an example in history, and with his usual ardour and rapidity, forced his way into the heart of Austria, spread a panic to the very gates of Vienna, and compelled a ready acceptance of the terms of accommodation he was pleased to offer. The preliminaries were signed at Leoben on the seventeenth of April; and on the eighteenth of October the treaty, which delivered France from its last and most formidable enemy on the continent, was ratified at the Friulense castle of Campo Formio. Posterity will know how to appreciate and acknowledge the eminent service rendered to the human race by the magnanimous British monarch, who, seconded by his intrepid minister, and a brave, wise, and loyal people, singly and undismayed, in the midst of this defection, still braved the raging tempest; and will, it may be hoped, still be the means not only of preventing the extinction of piety, honour, and religion, but also of preserving the elegant improvements which embellish life, and contribute to sooth the hour of sorrow.

It might have been expected that the Swiss would now have reaped the fruits of the servile obsequiousness of their rulers, and that all danger would henceforth have been averted from

from their confines :¹⁵ but so far was such an act of justice from entering into the plans of the French rulers, that the disastrous period of humiliation now approached, when this deluded people were to experience reproaches, insults, and calamities of the most degrading nature ; and, at length, the final overthrow of their venerable confederacy. It remained now for the French, who had strengthened their eastern frontier by the course of the Rhine, and the republican out-posts in Italy and Holland, to secure it completely by assimilating to their government, or obtaining an absolute sway over, one of the most martial people, inhabiting a country which has not improperly been called the citadel of Europe. It became also necessary for them to raise fresh supplies towards carrying on the plan of universal conquest they seem at this time to have digested. To new-model the government of this country, and to reduce its supreme power into one collective body, appeared to them the most conducive to their purposes ; being well aware that they would find it much easier to influence, or rather direct, the spirit of one ruling aggregate, than to conciliate the opinions of upwards of twenty

¹⁵ Many enlightened Swiss persist in their opinion that, but for the treaty of Campo Formio, their neutrality would still have saved their country,

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 } fœderative, but independent, governments,
 often differing in principles and interest, but
 in general tenacious of their antiquated max-
 ims, and firmly addicted to their religious du-
 ties and opinions, and to the dictates of justice
 and humanity, which it might be thought
 would ill qualify them as allies or members of
 the overbearing republic.

The French
 bring
 charges
 against the
 Swiss.

The first step of the directory towards secur-
 ing a plausible pretence for an open rupture,
 was to proclaim to the world the various insults
 their nation had sustained on the part of the
 confederates. A formal manifesto being as yet
 premature, they caused their periodical papers
 and occasional pamphlets,¹⁶ to exhibit charges
 which the republic, they declared, could no
 longer suffer to pass unnoticed and unrevenged.
 They urged, that the Swiss had, during the
 war, made most usurious profits in their com-
 mercial intercourse with France: that not only
 their illicit traffic with the French assignats,
 but also their abundant fabrication of them,
 had greatly contributed to depreciate their
 value, and had, in fact, materially injured the
 credit of the French nation: the toleration of
 the emigrant priests and royalists; the coun-
 tenance given to a contraband trade, chiefly

¹⁶ The Rédacteur, Moniteur, Publiciste, Les Bailiffs
 Suisses demasqués, &c. &c.

with

with English goods; and the suffering a British minister to reside in their country, who, it was pretended, by underhand practices, and enormous subordinations, fomented sedition, and encouraged levies against the republic; the persecuting the friends of liberty, and at all times displaying an aversion to the revolutionary principles espoused by a people which proudly assumed the name of the great nation; these were the most important among the general accusations brought forward with much speciousness and arrogance. To these they also added, as particular instances of disrespect towards the great republic, the seizure of the envoys Semonville and Maret, on the confines of the Valteline;¹⁷ the suffering the reduced officers to wear the military orders conferred on them by the king; the trespass of the Austrians at the cordon of Huningen; and various other imputations of a still more trivial nature.

Although it was manifested that no force of argument would avert the ruin to which the directory had devoted this country, yet one of the ablest among the statesmen of Berne¹⁸ did

¹⁷ 25th of July, 1793. They were indeed seized on the Helvetic territories, but on the very confines, where there was no post of defence, and by Austrian catchpoles (*sbirri*) who had been sent thither from Milan.

¹⁸ C. L. Haller, *Exposé Historique*, &c.

not

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not omit to vindicate his country from these aspersions, in a manner that has appeared satisfactory to all impartial men, but could not disarm the French directors. The freedom of trade, he said, could not be restrained without mutual disadvantages ; and French individuals, as well as the state itself, have, no doubt, reaped as much advantage from this traffic as those of Switzerland. The forging of assignats he positively denied, and quoted the different ordinances that were issued for preventing such illicit practices, and for restraining any fraudulent traffic respecting them : the Swiss merchants, he added, had in fact long supported the credit of the French paper currency ; and when it at length failed by its enormous accumulation, none were more injured than these fair dealers : no nation, he maintained, suffered more by the failure of the French funds than the Swiss ; nor was the sudden reduction of their regiments in the French service, without the allotment of the least indemnification, a trivial cause of the diminution of the property of his countrymen, occasioned by the proceedings of the French government : ‘ And yet ‘ with all these losses,’ he concludes, ‘ has not ‘ the nation stedfastly resisted the repeated and ‘ advantageous offers of the combined powers ‘ to join in the coalition ; and this too at a time ‘ when

‘when its acceptance would probably have proved fatal to the republic?’

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Swarms of emigrants, he owns, flocked into this country, to which they were allured by its contiguity and similarity of language; nor could the governments, consistently with their constitution, refuse them admission: but, so far from countenancing any secret intrigues of theirs, he recites the many regulations that were made to prevent the effects of their under-hand practices, and observes that, finding them ineffectual, the supreme council of Berne ventured upon a measure that had never before been recurred to, the ordering all these unhappy exiles, without any delinquency being proved against them, to quit the territories of the canton;¹⁹ and this order being repeatedly enforced a few months after, it was found that only one hundred and fourteen of these wretched fugitives still remained, all of whom, from decrepitude, infirmity, or tender years, were objects of the deepest commiseration. Even before this proscription, every emigrant whom the French minister denounced, was immediately seized, closely examined, and rigorously dealt with if the least delinquency against the French government was proved against him. When, in

¹⁹ June the 17th, 1796.

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the sequel, these hapless fugitives were abandoned, persecuted, and oppressed, in most countries in Europe, and many, driven by despair, resolved to seek either a precarious existence, or a grave, in their native country, numbers, it is true, attempted to penetrate by the way of Switzerland. The government, in all the steps it took concerning these rash adventurers, acted in concert with the French ambassador, and used every possible precaution to prevent the undue distribution, or the forging of passports; and it is well known that most of the spurious permissions that were detected, had been procured from the interior parts of France. Regardless, moreover, of the established liberty of the press, all publications that any way reflected upon the government of France were instantly suppressed by the Swiss states, and their authors ordered to quit the territories of the confederacy; among whom is even to be numbered their meritorious countryman Mallet du Pan, who was taxed with having contributed some impartial strictures to a periodical paper, at that time publicly printed at Paris. For the truth of all these allegations, an appeal is made to the French ambassador himself, who, more than once, publicly expressed his approbation of the efficacious measures that had been taken to accomplish the objects.

objects of his various requisitions. Mr. Wickham's residence, as minister from a sovereign at peace with the cantons, could not, upon any principles of the law of nations, be objected to or impeded : but the same French ambassador is called upon to attest whether all possible precautions were not taken to prevent the alleged secret practices and intrigues which had been made a subject of reproach. The seizing or banishing some of their own countrymen, who had publicly avowed themselves hostile to the established government, was surely a legal act of self-preservation, which every state must needs be allowed to practice : how else could the French directory have justified its proceedings on the memorable eighteenth of Fructidor ?

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Even before the conclusion of the treaty of Campo Formio, which may be considered as the æra when the destruction of the Helvetic confederacy was decreed by the directory, the victorious Bonaparte, having been called upon to decide a contest between the Grison leagues and their subject provinces of Valteline, Chiavenna, and Bormio, which had revolted ; without the least regard to six existing treaties, by which the French monarchs had guaranteed these provinces to those leagues, determined the difference, by annexing them to the newly established

Valteline,
&c. torn
from the
Confederacy.

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established Cisalpine republic : and thus, by a simple proclamation, he abridged the confederacy of a fertile valley, near one thousand square miles in extent, and containing upwards of one hundred thousand inhabitants.

Bonaparte
visits Swis-
serland.

Having completed his brilliant military, as well as diplomatic, career in Italy, Bonaparte, under pretence of repairing to the congress at Rastadt, resolved upon a progress through the territories of the confederacy. At Lausanne he was welcomed with a degree of frantic exultation : at Berne he experienced a ceremonious, but splendid, civility, expressive of the awe in which the people stood of a man of superior talents, but in whose promises they knew they could place no confidence.³⁰ The magistrates of Soleure, unpolished and morose, could so little accommodate themselves to the honours due to the hero of the day, that they sentenced the commander of their artillery to a long imprisonment, because he saluted him on his passage through their city without orders. He was however soon released, at the peremptory

³⁰ The magistrates had prepared for Bonaparte a sumptuous ball and supper at Berne, relays of horses throughout their country, and every mark of honour they usually conferred upon the greatest sovereigns ; all which he disdained, and had not even the common civility to return a visit to the avoyer. The country was already doomed.

requisition

requisition of the French minister. What im-
 pressions the general received on this journey
 may be gathered from his declaration on his
 arrival at Basle, where the revolutionary mine
 he knew was near exploding, 'that he was
 'now once more in a republic.' He surveyed,
 with the eye of a soldier, the fields of Morat,
 and the enclosures of St. Jacob ; but, with the
 sagacity of a French politician, he 'predicted
 that the Gothic fabric of the Helvetic constitu-
 tion was no longer suited to the present times,
 and would quickly be subverted. Granting
 the fact, men of candour will determine whe-
 ther the fault lay with the times, or with the
 constitution.

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The period was now approaching when the
 confederacy was to receive its deadly blow.
 The mild Barthelemy was recalled, and placed
 in the directory. He was succeeded by Ba-
 cher, who however, being likewise found too
 lenient for the services expected from him, was
 soon after superseded by Mengaud, a creature
 of Rewbel, who had been thoroughly trained
 in the school of republican virtues. This new
 pro-consul was no sooner arrived at Basle than
 he displayed a wide tri-coloured flag before his
 house, and in his frequent journeys through the
 Swiss territories, decorated his carriages with
 abundance of tri-coloured streamers. He not
 only

Mengaud's
mission.

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only signified his protection, and promised the support of the great nation, to all who might think themselves injured by their governments, but even (an insult of which there is no example in the history of civilized and independent nations) issued formal protections²¹ in favour of the inhabitants of several towns, declaring the magistrates personally responsible for the safety of all those who might manifest principles favourable to the revolution, or, in other words, shew themselves averse to their legitimate sovereigns. He had at first the humiliation to find that the number of disaffected was but a small proportion of the people : but it soon appeared that the fascinating invitations he threw out, which the magistrates knew not how to obviate or resent, rapidly increased these numbers of adherents, particularly in certain districts, where collateral causes had combined to excite uneasiness and discontent.

The Vaudese claim the guarantee of France.

In addition to this encouragement, the movers of sedition in the Pays de Vaud found now another expedient for authorizing the interference of France in their quarrel with their sovereigns of Berne. La Harpe supplied the

²¹ Posselt has preserved the form of these protections, as well as most of the authentic documents that have been used in the present narrative.

materials

materials in an elaborate work,²² in which he stated that this country had, while in the hands of the dukes of Savoy, possessed several privileges, among which, an annual assembly of the states, consisting of the dignified clergy, the nobles, and the chief magistrates of fourteen towns, was not one of the least important: that formerly, no ordinance of the sovereign had the force of law, till it had been confirmed at one of these assemblies: that in the treaty of St. Julian,²³ in which the Duke of Savoy had mortgaged the Pays de Vaud to the canton of Berne, and in a subsequent pacification concluded at Lausanne,²⁴ in which Duke Emanuel

²² *Essai sur la Constitution du Pays de Vaud*, two volumes, 8vo. The same question had a few years before been discussed with abundance of ingenuity, though with a less sinister view, by J. J. Cart, in his *Lettres à B. de Muralt sur les événemens du Pays de Vaud*. Muller, in his well authenticated History of Switzerland, had long before admitted the existence of the states of the Pays de Vaud; but in this instance he had no better voucher than a written document in the archives of the Baron of Blonay, the validity of which has been called in question by N. F. du Mulinen in his *Recherches historiques sur les anciennes Assemblées du Pays de Vaud*. In this, as in many other diplomatic disquisitions, the more a matter is investigated, the more it is generally involved in obscurity. Mulinen's pamphlet, however, has hitherto remained unanswered.

²³ Of October the 19th, 1530.

²⁴ October the 30th, 1564.

Philibert

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Philibert had ceded to the said canton for ever; the claims of his house upon that district, all the rights and privileges of the clergy, nobles, commoners, and communities, had been expressly reserved in the full extent in which they had been enjoyed in former times: and that the latter of these treaties had been formally guaranteed by the French monarch, soon after its conclusion.²⁵ Grounded upon these arguments, la Harpe called upon his countrymen to vindicate their established right; to demand a convocation of the states; and, if refused, to claim the guarantee of the French republic, which, as representative of the monarch, and by its late conquest of the duchy of Savoy, would think itself bound to espouse their cause.

Various writers have denied the facts alleged by la Harpe, and controverted the inferences he derives from them, even if they were founded in truth. The states at best, we are told by M. de Mulinen, were of feudal institution, and convened occasionally, not at the option of the people, but at the pleasure of the sovereign, who only called them together when his service required additional taxes. Whatever reservation the Duke of Savoy may have made in the last-mentioned cession, the canton of Berne,

²⁵ Charles the Ninth. April the 25th, 1565.

he

he asserts, could never have violated this condition, since it never imposed a new tax: and he further maintains that, as appears from a variety of municipal constitutions in the country, no mention is ever made of this antiquated privilege. Granting, however, all that the advocates for the assembly of the states can allege in favour of the claim, it is manifest that the attempt to enforce it was a mere pretence, since the states at best would not be a representative body such as they demanded: and it must be owned that it was a strange prevarication in the French directory, who have sported with all the compacts of their monarchs,²⁶ to avail themselves in this instance of two obsolete treaties, in order to give a colour to the outrage they had in view. It would, no doubt, have better become the frankness, honour, and generosity of which they made so frequent and ostentatious boasts in their official writings, to have proclaimed that their motives were no other than those of self-interest; and that the preponderancy of power was the only title on which they founded their arbitrary interference.

The directory, on the twenty-eighth of December, issued a decree by which they declared the members of the regencies of Berne and Fri-

²⁶ Witness the examples of the military capitulations, the Valteline, &c.

burg

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X
burg personally and individually responsible for the lives, liberty, and property of all the Vaudese, who, claiming the return of their privileges, had placed themselves under the safeguard of the republic. A division of the army of Italy under general Massena advanced towards the confines of the canton; and the insurgents, seeing the certainty of effectual protection, increased considerably both in number and audacity.

Had the government of Berne, at this crisis of an impending invasion, which in all former instances had been the signal of a general armament of the whole nation, combined all its powers, and resolved unanimously, if they could not weather the storm, at least to fall in a manner worthy of their ancestors, they might still perhaps have saved their independence and tottering constitution. But, instead of the firmness and wisdom the times required, they unfortunately betrayed an inconsistency and hesitation, which, while it stimulated their adversaries, disheartened and perplexed the multitude of friends who were still ready to lay down their lives in defence of their venerable constitution. Like the helpless squirrel, which (if travellers may be credited) is fascinated by a voracious serpent, and struggles for a while with anxious trepidation to escape the charm,

but is at length compelled to rush into the jaws CHAP.
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where it meets its doom: so did these misguided rulers shew themselves incapable of adopting any but false measures, which ultimately accelerated their destruction.

The supreme council of Berne sent another Berne tem-
porizes.
special commission into the Pays de Vaud, to investigate the causes of the discontents, to ascertain their full extent, and to suggest such means as might appear most conducive to restore tranquillity. Whether the evil had not yet made any considerable progress, or whether the commissioners suffered themselves to be beguiled by false appearances or representations, they made so favourable a report, that the council thought it expedient to propose a general oath of allegiance to the sovereign. The event proved less successful than was expected, and produced an open breach, which, had the government been wise, it would by all means have endeavoured to conceal.²⁷ A party of insurgents from Vevay, proceeded so far as

²⁷ The country people in general complied. At Lausanne about three-fourths of the citizens took the oath with enthusiastic alacrity: at Vevay, Aubonne, and Moudon, the municipal officers chiefly proved refractory, and no doubt influenced many, though far from the majority of the inhabitants. The battalions of Vevay, Aubonne, and one of Moudon, refused the military oath.

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1798.

Diet at
Arau.

to seize the castle of Chillon, in which some of the former agitators were still detained ; and this day, the tenth of January, may (like that of the demolition of the Bastille in France) be deemed the first of the Helvetic revolution. Popular clubs, committees of safety, and national guards, were instituted ; and abundance of inflammatory publications were scattered among the people : but still, in the midst of these commotions, no mention was yet made of a separation from the parent canton.

Another expedient, which had the semblance of vigour, was about the same time recurred to, with a view of calling forth the united powers of the whole nation. A general diet was summoned at Arau for the solemn renewal of the confederacy ; and it actually met on the second of January. Mengaud did not fail to resort to it, and, for a while, used the most conciliatory language ; at the same time throwing a mysterious veil over the designs of France, which, as he probably expected, afforded to many of the deputies plausible pretences for procrastination, for palliative measures, and feeble propositions ; the whole disguised under the specious mask of moderation. Mengaud soon perceived, and no doubt reported, the imbecility of this assembly, and was instructed to assume a less qualified line of conduct ; and he

he accordingly, on the eleventh of January, presented a note declaring, 'that should the report be confirmed that Austrian forces had entered the Grison country, a body of French troops would likewise immediately pass the frontiers.' This ambiguous menace (for no Austrians had trespassed on their confines) filled the assembly with doubt and consternation. Some surmised that the two contracting powers had, in the treaty of Campo Formio, with the same regard to equity, honour, and the faith of compacts, with which they had annihilated the ancient republic of Venice, decreed the partition among themselves of the Helvetian territories. Others saw manifestly that France was seeking a pretence for subverting their constitution; few were impressed with a sense of the undaunted firmness that now became them: and all looked forward with dread to the unravelling of the enigma, which they were well apprized had not been thrown out without some view. In this state of doubt and perplexity they resolved indeed (Basle only excepted, which had already withdrawn its deputies) to renew the perpetual confederacy, and to attest it by a solemn oath. This oath was actually taken on the first of February; but it was not such an oath as had been pronounced by Stauffacher, Furst, and Melchthal,


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Revolution
at Basle.

and their thirty friends in the field Rutli, when they swore to live free, or not to live at all.

The recall of the deputies of Basle from the diet at Arau, was the consequence of the first public defection of a member of the confederacy. The almost constant residence of Mengaud in this city had supplied him with numbers of opportunities, which he well knew how to improve, to bias the minds of men whom ambition, avarice, or fear, had already estranged from the true patriotism which had rendered their confederacy respectable among nations. Like the Pays de Vaud, it harboured likewise in its bosom, domestic promoters of sedition, who were equally zealous and industrious in propagating their revolutionary principles. Wernard Huber, an apothecary and chemist of some eminence, who, in his youth, having misconceived some of the specious doctrines of Rousseau, had for a while misapplied his more than ordinary talents in the profession of a swine-herd, was now become one of the most prolific writers in the cause of the new system of politics; and reprobating every impediment that might check the progress of his favourite career, was particularly acrimonious against the British government, and its representative with the cantons, to the supposed corrupt practices of whom he imputed all the calamities that

that had of late befallen his country, not even CHAP.
 excepting a contagious disorder among the 
 cattle, which at that time prevailed in most
 parts of Switzerland. Vischer, le Grand, and
 Erlacher, were, though not so conspicuous, yet
 no less fervent in the cause of political innova-
 tion ; and formed at Basle a club of *friends of*
liberty, which soon conferred some consequence
 on the party and its leaders. But among the
 latter none exerted himself with so much ardour
 and success as the grand tribune Peter Och, who,
 although a warm friend and near relation
 of the unfortunate burgomaster Dietrich of
 Strasburg, who had fallen a victim to the revo-
 lution, although impoverished by the heavy
 losses he had sustained in the French funds, was
 nevertheless, having some cause of complaint
 against the government of Berne, an indefati-
 gable promoter of the levelling system.²⁸ He

²⁸ The temper of this demagogue displayed itself in a letter he wrote towards the end of January to the magistrates of his city. Having premised the usual stile of, ‘ most honourable and gracious lords,’ he continues, ‘ perhaps this is the last time your excellencies will hear yourselves addressed by these antiquated titles ; and I must confess that I am truly happy, to exchange these vain denominations for the far more graceful appellation of citizen.

‘ I consider the Helvetic revolution as completed. The several cantons, their subjects, and their allies, will soon be formed into one democratic republic, according to the representative

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and the above mentioned senator Visser, likewise his relation, ventured now openly to propose a change in the constitution; and deeming the triumph of France highly conducive to his purpose, the tribune in particular became the principal instrument in bringing about the

‘representative system. All the means hitherto attempted to repress the revolution may perhaps for a while retard its progress, and render the crisis more dangerous and afflictive; but they will certainly not prevent the completion of it.’

He then congratulates his canton in having been the first to set the example of a revolutionary spirit; he exhorts the insurgents to persist, and denounces vengeance against all those who shall venture to impede them. He taxes the diet at Arau with having unwarily disappointed the expectations of the true patriots: and prescribes the steps to be immediately taken, viz. 1. To abolish all distinctions of freemen and subjects; 2. to establish primary assemblies for the choice of representatives; 3. that these representatives prepare a new constitution: and 4. that meanwhile a provisional commission be authorized to carry on the immediate purposes of government. He then concludes,

‘Perhaps I am now, by this decided declaration, increasing the multitude of charges that have been brought against me by the aristocratic party for these ten years past, and for which they have ever sought to be revenged: but in proportion as I find myself persecuted by such men, so does the estimation in which I hold myself rise in my bosom.’

This letter, printed separately, was dispersed all over the canton of Basle, and soon found its way throughout the territories of the confederacy.

Prussian

Prussian and Spanish treaties with the French republic. Having been sent to Paris on a public mission, he there concerted with La Harpe, and other malcontents from the Pays de Vaud, and jointly with them framed a new constitution, which, without the least retrospect to the difference and variety of local, moral, and political circumstances, was meant to be enforced in Switzerland by an host of armed apostles.

Ochs, and his co-operators, were well acquainted with the impatience with which a great part of the peasantry of Basle bore, what had been represented to them as an intolerable aristocratic servitude; and among these, accordingly, appeared the first symptoms of an open resistance to the established authorities. The artless peasants had been persuaded that they were not free, because they were not admissible into the supreme council, because they could not practise trades within the city, and because they were restrained from planting trees of liberty at their pleasure. Le Grand and others of the democratic party, were deputed to appease them: but these assisted them in drawing up three fundamental points, the acceptance of which was to be the basis of an accommodation. They previously declared that the people would ever consider themselves as a part of the Swiss nation; but in return claimed, 1. an unqualified admission

CHAP. X. admission of liberty and equality, and the inalienable rights of men ; and hence the introduction of a representative government : 2. an intimate union between the citizens and peasantry founded on the principle of perfect equality : and 3. a speedy convocation of a national assembly. This declaration of rights²⁹ having been signed by seven of the leaders, was, by a numerous band of the peasants who had previously destroyed most of the castles of the bailiffs, conveyed into the city ; and, on the twentieth of January, it was accepted by the expiring magistracy, who instantly recalled their deputies at Arau, suffered a tree of liberty to be planted with great exultation in the city, and on the fifth of February resigned their authority to a deputation of sixty, selected from all ranks, who, under the direction of a president, were to hold the reins of government until the new constitution, founded upon the principles of the Magna Charta, should have acquired its due consistency. Thus was Basle the first branch which dropped off from the venerable tree of the Helvetic confederacy, and gave an example which others soon followed with as much levity as infatuation.

²⁹ They actually gave it the name of *Magna Charta*, and prefixed to it the high-sounding expletives, liberty, equality, unanimity, confidence,

The

The plausible insinuations of Ochs and his associates, and the alternate threats and blandishments of Mengaud, would perhaps have been less effectual towards producing this defection, had not French forces spread all around the canton, and offered a sure protection to all who were inclined to favour the revolution. The country of Porentru, taken a few years before from the see of Basle, having been formally ceded to France by the treaty of Campo Formio, was now converted into a department by the name of Mont Terrible: but the Bishop of Basle still retained the Erguel, bordering on the canton of Berne, and avowedly within the limits of the Helvetic republic. Regardless, however, of this title to security, and without assigning the most slender motive, the French general, St. Cyr, entered it suddenly towards the end of the preceding year, took possession of it in the name of the republic, declaring, that France succeeded now to all the property, domains, rights, and prerogatives of the prelate. Upon this ground the general even seized the episcopal palace at Basle, which necessarily introduced French troops into that city.

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The French
take the
Erguel;

The small republic of Mulhausen, one of the allies of the confederacy, being surrounded on all sides by the French department of the Upper Rhine, saw itself compelled by its locality, but

and Mul-
hausen.

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but not till after two years of blockade and famine, to demand the protection of, and, on certain conditions, to be incorporated into, the French commonwealth. Thus was Helvetia, on this side also, deprived of a territory of upwards of two hundred and fifty square miles in extent, and containing between twenty and thirty thousand inhabitants; and Berne saw a frontier of near twenty miles laid open to the French. In the days of Winkelried, and the great Erlach, an insult of far less magnitude would have instantly roused the whole nation into arms; and, with these united arms, it would either have perished, or compelled redress.

Revolution
at Zurich;

The borderers on the lake of Zurich now acted the part, respecting this canton, which the peasants of Basle had done towards their government. Some symptoms of disaffection had long since appeared among this people, especially among the opulent manufacturers of the rich town of Stæfa: but because no foreign abettors were at hand, the disturbance was soon quelled, and, except a few fines and imprisonments, no rigour was exerted against the insurgents. Some of them however, who had fled into foreign countries, returned about this time, and brought with them promises of support, which soon excited fresh troubles.

The

The government, in order to pacify them, granted certain demands, released eleven of the former insurgents, and even returned some of the fines. Bodmer, an aged inhabitant of Stæfa, a man of great authority among his neighbours, was of the number of the discharged prisoners; but though pardoned, he could not forgive the sentence that had been pronounced against him. The rejoicings all along the lake, on this occasion, were excessive, and ominous of the short duration of the new order of things. Bodmer, and a few leading associates, established central committees, and in their name demanded the redress of some further grievances, and above all, an extension of their privileges. Having made a few concessions, the government now issued a strict order for a general armament, which instantly gave rise to fresh remonstrances and discontents. The borderers in particular (whom the French soon after found it necessary to disarm) shewed themselves the least disposed to co-operate towards the preservation of their country, and still pressed for a thorough reform in the government: and the supreme council, at length, seeing no other means of restoring tranquillity, agreed to an extraordinary convention of one hundred members, chosen out of all the different ranks, to whom was committed the charge of

N. W.-

CHAP. new-modelling the state. These drew up a set
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 of articles, similar to the Magna Charta of Basle, which was ratified by the burgomaster, great and little councils, and the body of citizens; and by virtue of these the old magistracy retained only the temporary and feeble authority of a provisionary government. These, jointly with the convention, attempted once more to call forth the contingent for the defence of the country, but collected only a small and dispirited number; the summons being in general answered by proposals for fresh emendations: nor were the troubles at all allayed by the ready and unqualified concessions of the various momentary magistracies that were successively attempted.³⁰

Similar revolutions, rather the effect of imita-

³⁰ Leonard Meister, a professor at Zurich, has published a tract, *on the Progress of the Political Commotions in Switzerland*, Zurich, 1798, 8vo. in which he displays, and labours covertly to justify, the series of new plans for a reform of government, proposed by different clubs and associations in his canton, which they always brought forward in answer to the urgent solicitations of the magistrates to march to the relief of Berne. These sorry politicians thought it, no doubt, wise to insist upon repairing a house which was on fire. ‘*Ita res se habet, ut plerumque, qui fortunam mutaturus est, Deus consilia corrumpat, efficiatque, quod miserrimum est, ut casus in culpam transeat.*’ Vel. Paterc. Hist. Rom. ii. 118.

tion and the pusillanimity of the rulers than of necessity or compulsion, took place about the same time in various other cantons. Lucern confirmed a Magna Charta on the thirty-first of January.* Shaffhausen planted the tree of liberty on the eighth of February; and Soleure, not without much opposition on the part of a numerous nobility and clergy, and even of the generality of the country people, issued, on the eleventh of the same month, a declaration, asserting the liberty and equality of all ranks in the community. At Friburg the parties ran high; but neither of them obtained any decisive advantage. In the small cantons, the friends of innovation were not numerous enough to effect a change; and the magistrates, uninfluenced by fear, did not see how they could possibly revolutionize their governments into a more democratic form. They did not, however, hesitate fully to emancipate their subject bailiwicks, on whose inhabitants they conferred equal rights with their own people; and thus did the Thurgau, the Marches, Sargans,

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at Lucern,
Shaffhausen, &c.

* This was effected against the sense of the people. The magistrates in various places seem to have revolted against themselves,—the abdication of a government at a moment of difficulty (of pilots in a storm), must no doubt be considered as the height of insanity. It may well be said on this occasion, *Relicta non bene parmula*.

and

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and the Rheinthal, receive an extension of privileges which it had been better had they always possessed them. The Abbot of St. Gallen saw himself compelled to grant valuable immunities to his subjects of the old district³¹ and Tocken-burg; and, such is at times the infatuation of men, that even the inferior clergy of the lower Valais were not deterred by the example of their brethren in France, who, by counteracting their higher orders, brought on their own ruin, from joining the disaffected in their districts, who, in vain however for the present, strove to effectuate a revolution.

Thus was the old venerable confederacy now virtually dissolved. The deluded advocates of innovation prognosticated that by thus approximating to the French form of government, they should deprecate the violence with which they had been threatened; and, at least, obviate the greatest calamity that could befall their country, the invasion of a foreign army: and they vainly augured that it was now needless for them to arm at all. The promoters of these partial revolutions flattered themselves that, if the directory should have recourse to any compulsive means, it would be individually in their favour, and in order to raise them to the pre-

³¹ *Alte Landschaft*; the peculiar domain of the abbot round the city.

eminent

eminent stations, at which they were ambitious to arrive. Vain hopes! fifty thousand bayonets soon proved the directory to be well apprized that this, once happy, country, possessed public treasuries, opulent families, numerous arsenals; and, above all, that it was a country whence they would be enabled to awe most of the great powers of Europe, and from which, as they had learnt from long experience, they might derive the best reinforcements to their armies. These, and by no means the modifications of the governments, or the futile cause of a few turbulent insurgents, were the real objects of the depredators, who had industriously fomented these disorganizing conflicts.

The canton of Berne, till now the pillar of the confederacy, and the main, at least at this time, the ostensible object of the French revolutionary projects, seeing itself now surrounded by dangers, openly deserted by some of its allies, dubious of the intentions of others, with two formidable armies pressing hard upon its frontiers, harassed moreover by some of its own members, and divided in its councils, pursued measures which were alternately feeble and audacious, often contradictory, and at all times undecided. Those among its rulers who were impressed with the remembrance of the untarnished glory of their ancestors, and of the trophies

Conduct of
Berne.

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phies of Sempach, Laupen, Granson, and Morat, and thought they ought not to survive their independence, prevailed for a while, and obtained a decree for sounding a general alarm throughout the Helvetic states, and arming the nation. Abundance of loyal addresses came from all parts of their canton, especially from the Oberland; and multitudes flocked to the capital, animated with an ardent zeal for their country's cause, and fully bent to maintain, at the hazard of their lives, the constitution under which they had prospered for so many centuries. The other cantons, as might have been expected, proved remiss; and some of them, being jealous of the preponderancy Berne had long maintained, were utterly averse to contribute to its defence, in which they were not aware how much their own security was implicated.

Colonel Weiss was, at this crisis, sent into the Pays de Vaud with dictatorial powers, and ordered to suppress the central club at Lausanne, and the various committees in the other towns, to repossess himself of the castle of Chillon, and to proclaim martial law throughout the country.³² This semblance of severity soon provoked a resistance, which the malcontents

³² The martial law, though decreed, was, in fact, never proclaimed.

well

well known would be vigorously seconded by the forces that now lined the frontiers: but, what far exceeded their expectation, even the diet that was still sitting at Arau, sent a messenger to Berne, earnestly recommending the repeal of the martial law, and exhorting the government to comply, as far as possible, with the wishes of the people. Under these circumstances the feeble exertions of colonel Weiss,³³ and the approach of a body of troops from Berne, rather served to irritate than to allay the spreading spirit of insubordination. The colonel had now recourse to alternate expedients of ill-timed menaces and compliance: he endeavoured to soothe some with promises and commendation, and to intimidate others by a denunciation of immediate punishment. He boasted of his long and meritorious services, of his love of liberty, and his tenderness for the prosperity of the people. He wandered from place to place; and at length, finding his residence at and near Lausanne equally unprofitable and irksome, he fixed his head quarters

³³ The colonel, in this critical juncture, having received peremptory orders to proceed without delay to suppress the revolutionary club at Lausanne, and to put the Pays de Vaud in a state of defence, remained four days at Moudon to finish his tract, *Reveillezz vous Suisses*; and employed a whole week, after his arrival at Lausanne, in correcting the sheets of that publication.

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at Yverdon, where he at length published his well-known exhortation to his countrymen,³⁴ in which, among abundance of declamation, he advanced truths, which at another time would probably have made considerable impression upon minds not absolutely predisposed to reject their evidence.³⁵

Encouraged by such prospects of success, the numbers of disaffected increased sufficiently to induce them to take up arms, and declare their country independent of the canton of Berne. They seized all the funds destined for public uses; expelled the bailiffs from their various castles and jurisdictions; and sent to the French commander requesting that he would take effectual measures to rid the country of the Bernese troops that still remained among them. General Menard, who had now taken the command of the division of Massena, was impatiently expecting a requisition of this

³⁴ It can hardly be necessary to repeat that this was his boasted parænesis *Reveillez vous Suisses*.

³⁵ The whole tenor of Weiss's conduct has to many appeared ambiguous; and he has been described as a man of more vanity than wisdom and true patriotism. He printed in April last (1799) a laboured vindication of his conduct entitled, *Du début de la révolution Suisse: ou défense de ce-devant general de Weiss contre ses detracteurs*. We expect to have the thanks of our readers for not entering into this tedious controversy.

nature;

nature ; and without delay sent, on the twenty-fifth of January, his adjutant Autier, with a written message to colonel Weiss, declaring that unless he immediately evacuated the whole district which had now asserted its independence, he would instantly compel him to it at the head of his division. Autier, travelling in a carriage, was attended, not by a trumpet as is usual on similar occasions, but by two French hussars, and two Vaudese dragoons. On entering the village of Thierans, not far from Yverduin, he was suddenly shot at by two sentries stationed at this post, and in the fray that ensued the two hussars were killed. The Swiss who relate this encounter assert that the patroles having, in the dusk of the evening, challenged the unknown passengers, had, instead of an answer, received several cuts from the sabres of the hussars, by which one of the men had been severely wounded ; and that this man, not being able to resist the provocation, had fired his musket, and thus given rise to the skirmish. As this affray gave the first shadow of pretence to the hostilities immediately after commenced by the French, the government of Berne instituted a formal inquiry into the circumstances attending it ; and it cannot be doubted that, in the perilous state in which they found themselves, they would have inflicted some exemplary punishment on the two sentinels.

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X.Autier's re-
pulse.

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tinels, had they been any way delinquent. No fact seems better attested than that these men were not the aggressors ; and yet the French laid hold of this pretended outrage to justify their long premeditated invasion. Autier returned hastily to his head quarters ; and general Menard on the next day led his troops into the Pays de Vaud. The executive directory sent, on the fifth of February, a message to the legislative assembly, stating the particulars of this transaction, in a manner which could leave no doubt of the steps that would be taken to avenge the insult:

Delegates
assembled
at Berne.

No deliberation in the council of Berne was perhaps ever so momentous as the present, when the very existence of the state seemed to depend on the resolutions now to be taken. A few, even among the most zealous but dispassionate patriots, who perceived that nothing short of absolute submission would satisfy the avidity of the invaders, and who were not blinded concerning their inadequate means of resistance, were of opinion that the hour was now come, when a voluntary and unconditional surrender would be the best policy: but in this the prevailing party was far from coinciding. Full of confidence in the numbers they had collected, and in the loyalty and courage their people had at all times displayed ; auguring also that the extravagant demands

demands of the French plenipotentiaries at the congress of Rastadt would ere long give rise to a new coalition, which, now that the danger had reached them, they would gladly have joined; they obtained a decree for a further prosecution of vigorous measures, or at least to persist in asserting their independence. Not long before Menard's open invasion, the council of Berne, with a view to inspire confidence, and engage the affections of the people, had called together delegates from all the German districts of the canton, in order to consult with them on the present urgent emergency, and to assist in digesting a plan for new modelling the constitution into a representative form, not doubting that this compliance would avert the enmity of the regenerated nation. This deputation, jointly with the council, two days before Autier's repulse,³⁶ issued a proclamation couched in the most pathetic language, stating the great accession of vigour the state had acquired by the present unanimity of its members, acknowledging some defects in the constitution, and promising a speedy and effectual reform of all abuses. Having at the same time relinquished all hostile attempts upon the Pays

³⁶ February the third. This address was at the time considered as a most impressive exhortation, from which great effects were expected both at home and abroad.

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de Vaud, and vainly conceiving that they had complied with all France could demand of them; they wrote to the executive directory claiming a return of friendship and confidence, and demanding that, after this happy reconciliation, the troops of the republic might be ordered to withdraw from the Helvetic territories. Mengaud, to whom they sent a deputation to the same effect, eager to counteract the salutary effects which the conciliatory declaration of this new government might produce upon the people, sent a peremptory demand of redress for certain insults the partizans of France had sustained in the town of Arau; and moreover that the whole government of Berne, even with the modifications lately introduced, should, unconditionally and without delay, resign its authority, and make room for a provisional council, from which the old magistrates should be excluded. He added that the rejection of this proposal would be the signal for the march of the French troops to the capital of Berne.³⁷

³⁷ Mengaud thought it no doubt a humorous piece of pleasantry to parody the Creed in the following manner.
 ‘ I believe in one indivisible constitution; conceived with
 ‘ joy in the bosoms of all sound patriots of Helvetia; born of
 ‘ freedom, which had suffered under the oligarchies, and had
 ‘ been depressed in the principal regions in Switzerland:
 ‘ but after three centuries, it rose again from the dead;
 ‘ ascended into the hearts of the regenerated Helvetians;
 ‘ from

In order the more effectually to promote the object of his mission, Mengaud distributed in great abundance, and in different languages, a plan for a new Helvetic constitution, which, according to the French, Cisalpine, and Bata-vian standard, was to be one, indivisible, putely democratic, and representative; the whole country being for this purpose distributed into twenty-two departments, of which the bounda-ries were accurately defined. The Swiss thought they might still be permitted to canvas a pro-posal which so immediately and so essentially concerned them. Some of the most sagacious among them foreboded, that this new constitu-tion would inevitably prove highly detrimental, if not ruinous, to the whole nation. ‘Our

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Plan of a
new Con-
stitution.

‘from whence it will come to take vengeance of the tyrants, their fellow citizens. I also believe with great confidence in a general patriotic assembly of the Swiss; a communion of select, well-disposed, free-minded citizens of the thirteen cantons and their allies; the remission of all oppressive taxes; the resurrection of all the natural rights of men; and a perpetual freedom and equality of the people.’ Mengaud circulated likewise a similar parody of the Lord’s prayer. He appears throughout to have been a man devoid of all principle. M. Mallet du Pan saw him arrive at Zurich with a German prostitute, the sister of a carrier, who acted as his interpreter: and yet this man in his official papers boasted of his virtue, his morals, his loyalty, and of the respect that was due to his character.

‘country,’

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‘country,’ they said, ‘craggy and barren in
 ‘most parts, can only secure itself against the
 ‘convulsions of nature to which we are incessantly
 ‘exposed, by a great frugality in the government,
 ‘and an absolute exemption from taxes. The great
 ‘economy of our administrators, has hitherto
 ‘admitted of this exemption : but how shall we
 ‘provide for the salaries and gratuities of
 ‘directors, representatives, and the multitude of
 ‘substitutes the new constitution will require ?
 ‘How shall we pay and maintain the army this
 ‘constitution necessarily demands ? an army, the
 ‘sole purpose of which will be to involve us in
 ‘foreign wars. A country,’ they added, ‘like
 ‘ours, divided by deep chasms and enormous
 ‘precipices, containing a people so various in
 ‘language, cultivation, and manners ; is such a
 ‘country calculated for an indivisible and close
 ‘union, such as is prescribed by this constitution ?
 ‘is not the fœderation that has till now held us
 ‘together, the only tie that suits our sequestered
 ‘districts ? will the democratic cantons patiently
 ‘exchange their domestic, parental governments,
 ‘for the mere passive right of electing representatives
 ‘to a distant convention ? and will not, after
 ‘all, this code, constructed at Paris, manifestly
 ‘not for our advantage, convert our country, as
 ‘it has done Holland and Lombardy,

‘bardy, into a mere tool in the hands of the French directors, who know that they may better influence a national assembly, than the four-and-twenty sovereignties of which our country has till now consisted?’

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The government of Berne, at the same time that it sent to Mengaud, deputed also the treasurer Frising, a constant advocate in favour of the neutrality, and the senator Tscharnier, to general Brune, who now commanded the French army in the Pays de Vaud, to solicit the privilege of reforming their constitution without a total revolution, or the interference of foreign power. The general, who expected considerable reinforcements, and a co-operating army from the bishoprick of Basle, held a conciliatory language; but pretended a deficiency in his instructions for a negotiation of this nature, which however he intimated would undoubtedly be removed by the fresh orders he should demand from his directory. Meanwhile he proposed an armistice of fourteen days, which was readily accepted, and concluded on the fifteenth of February, and was hence to expire at the sun-set on the first of March. What degree of confidence the government of Berne placed in the professions of Brune it is needless to inquire, since they could not be blind to the necessity of preparing against an attack:

An Armistice.

CHAP. ^X attack: and, confiding no doubt in the justice of their cause, buoyed up also by the alacrity and enthusiasm displayed by their people, and still looking for a new coalition of the sovereigns whose thrones were menaced with destruction, they resolved, with more courage than probability of success, to bid defiance to a power which, after six bloody campaigns, had triumphed over most of the great potentates of Europe, and now possessed an army of four hundred thousand intrepid and well disciplined soldiers, who considered themselves as the conquerors of Europe; whose rapid career, neither the tactics of the best trained, nor the wild impetuosity of the half savage bands that were led out against them, had been able to impede; and for whom no craggy or snowy precipice had been inaccessible, and no torrent too wide or rapid.

Berneans. Some of the leaders at Berne, who were most indignant at the contemptuous treatment they had met with from the French emissaries, and dreading the underhand practices of that wily as well as enterprizing people, urged the necessity of making a speedy appeal to the sword. Among these was the veteran d'Erlach, formerly a general in the French service, and now commander in chief of the Bernese forces. On the twenty-sixth of February he came to the great

great council, demanded full powers to act according to the exigencies of the times, and was, without much opposition, authorized to pursue, immediately after the termination of the armistice, such measures as should to him appear most eligible. He accordingly arrayed all the forces that had been collected, consisting of about twenty-two thousand men, and formed a plan for a general attack in the night, between the first and second of March. He distributed the army into three grand divisions, forming a line near one hundred miles in length, from Soleure on the right, along the Aar and the lakes of Morat and Neuchattel, as far as Friburg, which city covered the left. The colonels Buren, Graffenried, and Watteville commanded severally these divisions, each of which, subdivided into columns, had its particular destination in the grand attack that was to be made in concert on all the posts of the enemy. A detachment stationed in the valley of Ormont, was at the same time to fall upon Aigle, and proceed from thence to Vevay, in order to harass the rear of the invaders.

At the same meeting of the council however, which granted these powers to Erlach, appeared an adjutant from general Brune, who announced that his chief, having received unlimited authority to treat for an accommodation,

CHAP. ^{X.} desired that the government of Berne would send to him deputies equally authorized for that purpose. Frising and Tscharner were accordingly once more deputed, and met the general at Payerne, to which place he had advanced his head quarters. The conditions he

Brune's Ultimatum.

here prescribed as an ultimatum were, 1. The abdication of the present magistrates, and a provisionary government to be invested with powers to frame a new constitution, founded on the principles of liberty and equality : 2. all persons confined for political opinions to be immediately released : and 3. all the troops, as well of Berne as of the other confederate states, to be dismissed without delay. These terms being complied with, he engaged to withdraw his forces, and that no French soldier should ever after enter the Helvetic territories *unless required by the new magistracy*. An answer was demanded in four-and-twenty hours, nearly the term at which the armistice was to expire. On dismissing the deputies, Brune published a proclamation, couched in the most conciliatory language, calling upon the people to lay down their arms ; and protesting that they had nothing to fear for their personal safety, their religion, or their political independence, all which he solemnly declared his government guaranteed to them without reservation. ' Be free,'

he

he concluded, 'the French nation invites you to it: nature ordains it.' Mengaud at the same time addressed to the people a severe philippic against their oligarchies, protesting that he was holding to them the language of simple truth; and uttering warm effusions of tenderness and commiseration; 'we offer you peace,' he subjoins, 'why will you have war?' Deputies from Basle were also ready to offer their mediation; and they insinuated that Zurich, Lucern, and Shaffhausen concurred with them in recommending a speedy compliance.

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The firmness of the magistrates forsook them on being apprized of these occurrences; or rather the minority, which favoured revolutionary principles, availing itself of the absence of Erlach, and a great number of officers who were likewise members of the council, prevailed, and obtained a repeal of the full powers that had been granted to their general. They moreover decreed the abdication of the government, and sent a deputation to Brune to make a tender of this abject submission.

Erlach had completed his arrangements for the general attack, which was intended for the second of March at four in the morning, when he received the fatal countermand, which in fact deprived him of his authority. Thunderstruck at the unexpected intelligence, he flew to
Berne,

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the disgraceful surrender. Failing of success, he hastened back to the army, where the suspension of command, the reports of the fluctuations in the government, and the suspicions that had been industriously spread among the men of the treachery of their leaders, had excited a spirit of insubordination, which soon broke out into acts of mutiny, and spread confusion throughout the ranks. Though himself oppressed with grief, and fired with indignation, he yet soothed, he argued, he promised to lead to the enemy, and still laboured to support the drooping spirits of his officers.

When the ignominious deputation from Berne arrived at the head quarters of Brune, he had already received intelligence of the arrival of general Schawenburg in the bishoprick of Basle, with a force which rendered him far superior to the enemy he now determined to encounter. The object of the truce was, no doubt, the obtaining time for securing this ascendancy, which was moreover greatly increased by the arrival of an ample train, particularly of horse-artillery, which had hitherto been unknown to the Swiss in their internal wars. Brune being now also apprized of the pusillanimity of the magistrates of Berne, and of the state of insubordination of their troops, scorned the proffered submission,

submission, and demanded an immediate dismissal of the army, and in fact a surrender at discretion. All parties at Berne shuddered at this austere command; and the council re-assembling, issued a fresh order for the attack, at the hour, and according to the plan pre-concerted by Erlach.

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Brune, who probably wanted a further respite, sent to offer, a prolongation of the truce for thirty hours, 'to afford time to the Berners,' as he expressed himself, 'to redress the injuries they had committed.'³⁶ The council of Berne, willing to grasp at every shadow of

A further
Truce.

³⁶ The evidence of this prolongation of the truce rests upon the positive expression of general Brune in his dispatch to the directory, of the 14 Ventose (4th March) in the words given in the text. As this extended the armistice to the morning of the 4th of March, and the French hence manifestly broke the engagement, there is no doubt that the advocates for French fidelity will find some subterfuge for exculpating this base transaction. The counter-order of the council of Berne, however, which could have no ground but such a prolongation, is a corroborating proof of its having been conceded; and until some very convincing arguments can be adduced to invalidate these proofs, the French must submit to the reproach of having, in this instance, forfeited their honour. Posselt, with less candour than we have usually found in his annals, takes no notice whatever of this breach of faith, nor even of the evidence contained in Brune's dispatch; an omission which, as he cannot but have known the fact, no doubt implies a strong symptom of conviction.

hope,

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hope, sent, two hours after the last order had been dispatched, another injunction to postpone hostilities, and wait for the event of further negotiations. The army upon this could scarcely contain its indignation, and be restrained from acts of violence. Printed papers had been distributed by French emissaries among the men, to caution them against the treachery of their leaders, who, it was asserted, had sold them to France.³⁹ General mistrust and confusion pervaded all the ranks, which were not a little increased by intoxication, to which the men, invited by the country people, freely gave way in their frantic rage.

Hostilities
began.

Such was the state of the Bernese army, when, early on the second of March, Erlach, who was with the centre division near Morat, heard the report of cannon, and soon after received intelligence that both his wings had been attacked by the enemy. He learnt at the same time, that on the preceding night, even before the expiration of the first armistice, general Schawenburg had, by order of Brune, attacked the castle at Dornach, at the northern extremity of the canton of Soleure; the place near which, three centuries ago, the Swiss had

³⁹ Many of these papers were found upon the men, some of whom produced them in justification for their having assassinated their officers.

fought

fought their last battle in defence of their long contested liberty,⁴⁰ and at which in this conflict they spilt their first blood in support of their dear bought independence. After several repulses, the place surrendered on the ensuing day; and the castle of Thierstein, likewise the seat of a bailiff of Soleure, fell into the hands of another detachment, not however until the governor had laid down his life in defence of the post committed to his charge.

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Forty-six thousand French troops, of whom nearly one half had lately arrived from the Rhine, had availed themselves of the darkness of the night, and advanced upon the principal posts of the Swiss army, which, besides being beyond measure agitated, did not expect to be so soon engaged. Before daybreak, on the second of March, a column, guided by some base traitors, invested the village of Lengnau, between Bienne and Soleure, where seven hundred and fifty Oberlanders made an obstinate defence against ten times their number of assailants; till, near two hundred of the former having been killed, and as many taken, the remainder retreated. The French column upon this proceeded to Soleure, and Schawemburg

⁴⁰ See vol. iii. p. 288. No foreign army had from that day (July 22, 1499) until the present year, ventured over the confines of Helvetia.

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sent a summons to the commandant, threatening that, unless he instantly surrendered, no quarter would be given to himself, the garrison, or the inhabitants. The suddenness of the attack, and the timid indecision of the magistrates, soon compelled a surrender, on a formal capitulation, that the security of persons and property should remain inviolate. But this did not prevent four-and-twenty villages in the vicinity from being given up to plunder. The burghers were disarmed, and all conspirators detained in the prisons were set at liberty.

At the same hour that Lengnau was invested, another column of the French army, under general Pigeon, advanced upon Friburg, and, in the dark, surprised the outposts, which fell back into the city, and roused the magistrates, who, unsuspecting of so near an attack, were sunk in sleep. The summons, as usual, were such as might be expected from an irritated sovereign to his rebellious subjects. The magistrates demanded a short respite in order to dismiss a body of Berners that had come to their assistance, and obtained an interval of only two hours. Meanwhile the alarm bells tolled in all the neighbouring villages, and a great number of peasants flocked into the city to reinforce the garrison. They recovered the arsenal, which the citizens who favoured the revolution

tion had already seized; and a message was sent to Pigeon, that the magistrates, being overpowered by the people, were not at liberty to offer a capitulation. Some howitzers were upon this fired against the city; several houses were set on fire, a breach was made in the wall, and a few soldiers entered the town. The Berners, about fifteen hundred in number, perceiving that the fortifications were incapable of defence, and that no effectual resistance was intended by the magistrates, resolved to evacuate the place. They marched out with thirty cannon and about four thousand peasants, in sight of, and unmolested by the enemy, and took post at the village of Saingines, about nine miles from Berne, where they maintained themselves against repeated attacks. A provisional government, elected by the districts of Friburg, immediately superseded the former magistracy; and the French seized all the arms, ammunition, and other effects they chose to appropriate to their use.

The surrender of Soleure and Friburg having exposed the Bernese army to the danger of being flanked and turned by the enemy, it became necessary to alter its position, and indeed to contract its front within a narrow space. The new line extended from Neweneck in the west, to Frauenbrunnen on the north, of Berne,

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which,

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X.The Swiss
mutiny.

which, together with the intermediate posts of Laupen, Gumminen, Arberg, Frienisberg, and Shoepfen, covered the capital at the distance of nearly ten miles. A retreat before a foreign enemy within their country, of which the Swiss remembered no instance in their history, gave full scope to the fury or rather delirium of the troops. The division of Argau, unwilling to share any longer in the ignominy that tarnished their reputation, forsook the army, and repaired to their respective homes. General de Buren on the right, found it impossible to retain above one quarter of his division true to their standards. In the centre division the mutiny assumed a more sullen and ferocious aspect. Many of the battalions repaired to the posts they themselves thought fit to occupy; and hence all co-operation (the soul of military enterprise) was at an end. The left division, by the skilful conduct of colonel Watteville, had indeed, without much loss or insult, fallen back into the strong posts of Neweneck, Laupen, and Gumminen: but the disgrace of a retreat cast a gloom throughout the ranks, which the triumphant alacrity of their foes was not calculated to dispel. The auxiliaries from the other cantons,⁴¹ considering themselves as a

⁴¹ Their whole number never exceeded five thousand five hundred men. The borderers on the lake of Zurich having refused

body of observation, and indeed instructed by their governments not to proceed far from their own frontiers, and to act solely on the defensive, kept at some distance in the rear, and separated soon after the discomfiture of the Bernese army. Thus terminated the vain parade of the solemn oath of union lately pronounced at Arau.

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On the third of March the council of Berne ordered a general alarm to be sounded throughout the country; and all the roads were soon filled with swarms of peasants, old men, boys, women; ill armed, without order, and uninstructed which way to direct their course. The magistrates, as if to render this semblance of vigour nugatory, completed at last what they had some time meditated; the final dissolution of their government: surrendering their authority to a body of men, hastily chosen by a tumultuous multitude, abundantly presumptuous, but unskilful and inexperienced, who, under the name of a *provisionary regency*,

refused to join, that canton did not supply more than fifteen hundred men. Lucern sent twelve hundred: the small cantons about four hundred each: but the latter had sent the main part of their force against the French, who now attempted their frontiers on the side of Italy. Four hundred men came from Shaffhausen, but they did not advance farther than Baden.

grasped

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grasped the reins, relaxed and lacerated by the improvident hands to which they had hitherto been committed. Brune at this moment sent a formal summons to Berne. The confusion hereupon became extreme both in the army and the city. No one knew any longer whom to obey, or whom to assail; whether their magistrates, their officers, or the French. In the evening the divisions at Gumminen and Laupen quitted their posts, and hastened to the city. Throughout the night, all who retained any influence endeavoured to appease the men; but they, at day-break, surrounded their chiefs, the colonels Stetler and Ryhiner, and stabbed them with their bayonets. No sooner had they committed this atrocious act, but, stung with remorse, they returned to their stations, and soon after fought with matchless bravery.⁴²

The new regency, now that all hopes of success had vanished, gave orders for a general attack, which however, none believed to be meant

⁴² On this day (March the third) the French demolished the ossuary of the Burgundians at Morat; and the directory, which reported the fact to the council of five hundred, mentioned, as a singular, and no doubt an ominous coincidence, that it was destroyed by the battallions of the Cote d'Or (the descendants of the Burgundians) on the very day on which the battle of Morat had been fought. (Monit. March the 14th, 1798.) It happens however, unfortunately for the contrast, that this battle was fought on the 22d of June.

in earnest, and few were willing to obey. The whole army was reduced to about fourteen thousand men. The posts of Neweneck and Gumminen were held by eight thousand, and these had above twice their number to contend with. The remainder had been collected at Frauenbrunnen; and Schawenburg, with eighteen thousand men (three times the number of the Berners) advanced with rapid strides against this feeble remnant of an host, which, if inspired with confidence, and suffered to exert its native vigour, would perhaps still have proved invincible.

No sooner had the provisional regency established its destructive influence, or rather a perfect anarchy, at Berne, than the venerable avoyer Steiguer, deposed the insignia of his office. Neither his precarious health, nor his advanced age,⁴³ nor yet the hopeless prospect before him, could deter him from joining the army. In the evening of the fourth he bid a long, and, as he might well forebode, an everlasting farewell to his native city; and, with a brother and some other relations, went forth to seek death in the ranks of his devoted countrymen. He joined Erlach at Frauenbrunnen.

On the fifth, at one in the morning, general

⁴³ He was in his 69th year.

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X

Last Day
of the Con-
federacy.

Rampon, who commanded the French on the right of their army, began a cannonade against, and soon after attacked, the posts at Laupen, Neweneck, and St Gines. He not only experienced a vigorous resistance, but was even repulsed at the latter place. The other posts indeed yielded a while to superior numbers; but, being reinforced by fifteen hundred men, they renewed the action with an ardour worthy of the glorious times of the confederacy. They rushed headlong among the foe, and in a short time compelled them to repass the ravin of Neweneck, and to retreat near ten miles, with the loss of two thousand men, and the whole of their artillery. The Berners lost about eight hundred men in this encounter; and among the slain were found several women, who scorned to shun the perils to which their fathers, husbands, friends, and countrymen, exposed themselves.⁴⁴ This victorious column was now preparing to advance towards Friburg, when the

⁴⁴ The French deny the fact of women having been found among the slain in the fields of battle (Monit. of the 6th of April, 1798); but the instance of veracity given in note 42, page 358, will not inspire us with great confidence in the truth of their assertions: and on the other hand, general Schawemburg, in his letter to general Jordy, of the tenth of September, giving an account of the extermination of the Underwalders, expressly acknowledges *that unfortunately many women had been cut to pieces in the havock at Stanz.*

events

events of the day, in another quarter, retarded its progress; and colonel Graffenried, who had fought with a heroism worthy of the old Helvetians, received orders about three o'clock, to desist from all further hostilities.

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About five in the morning of this eventful day,⁴⁵ general Schawenburg attacked on a sudden the front and each flank of the post of Frauenbrunnen; the place where, in a horrid night, the Berners, above four centuries ago, had defeated the Cambrian Ap Griffith, and his terrific English bands. Two thousand horse assailed the Swiss, who had no cavalry to oppose; and what galled them far more, a numerous train of horse artillery, the first that had ever passed their frontiers, spread death and dismay throughout their ranks. The fierceness of the resistance was unexampled. Women, endeavouring to obstruct the effect of the artillery, are known to have placed themselves before the mouths of the cannon, and to have hung on the wheels in order to impede their progress. The diminished bands, seeing themselves on the point of being surrounded, fell back to the village of Urteren, where they stood a second conflict. Unable however to main-

⁴⁵ Erlach, at the dawn of day, told his aid-de-camp, 'My friend, I see the sun rising; but I shall not behold its setting.'

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tain themselves, they took post at the Grauholtz, an almost impenetrable pass, about four miles from Berne, where, their right being covered by a rock, and the left by a swampy wood, they hoped effectually to secure themselves by an abbatis in front. The struggle had been no where so obstinate, nor the carnage so great as at this post. At length however, an opening having been made in the abbatis by the artillery, and a party of the enemy having climbed up the rock, and turned the right flank of the Bernese infantry, they found this post no longer tenable. They fell back, but formed anew, and stood a fourth attack about a mile behind this last station ; and notwithstanding their heavy losses, and their being exhausted with fatigue and want of sustenance, they yet fought a fifth time before the gates of Berne.⁴⁶ Men, women, children, and the cattle grazing on the meadows, fell promiscuously by the bayonets, sabres, and cannon of the invaders : yet these victims belonged to a people who are said to have called in a foreign power

⁴⁶ All the accounts of the French generals to their directory, acknowledge, that in every action the Swiss fought *avec une rare bravoure, et un acharnement inconcevable* : and they express their surprise at the resistance made by a militia which, during three centuries, had scarce seen the face of an enemy within their confines.

to free them from the tyranny of an oppressive government !

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Berne throughout this awful day, heard the incessant roar of cannon and musketry from various quarters, and saw the last disastrous conflict under its own walls. No preparations whatever had been made for the defence of the city. Horror and despair seized all the inhabitants. In this extremity the new regency, in its last agony, demanded a capitulation, or rather a safe-guard against the licentiousness of the victorious soldiers ; and in the evening the city surrendered, without any terms but a mere gratuitous promise of protection for the persons and property of the citizens. A tree of liberty was soon after planted in the presence of general Brune. Frisching, although president of a new provisional regency, yet a silent mourner over the calamities of his country, officiated at the inauguration. ‘ There,’ said he, addressing the French general, ‘ there is your ‘ tree of liberty : may it bring forth wholesome ‘ fruit !’

About noon, when all hopes were relinquished by the terrified regents, they dispatched the fatal order to the divisions at Neweneck and Gumminen to abstain from all further hostilities. Some of these brave, and on that very day victorious men, retreated to
the

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the city, and others bent their way towards their homes in the Oberland. The latter, frantic with rage and despair, fell upon their officers, slew their two adjutant-generals, Crousaz and Gumoens, and throughout the evening an epaulette was considered as a death-warrant. Among these leaders were also Steiguer and Erlach. The former, in disguise, and amidst intoxicated soldiers, peasants, and even parties of light troops of the enemy, reached the lake of Thun on foot. Extreme lassitude compelled him to seat himself on the trunk of a tree, and there he slept awhile. He then found means to cross the lake, and, still unknown, escaped the frenzy of the enraged villagers, and reached at length the canton of Underwalden; but he did not think himself secure until he entered the gates of the Austrian town of Bregenz.⁴⁷

Erlach assassinated.

The fate of the unhappy Erlach was still less propitious, unless indeed he would have deemed it a calamity to survive the downfall of his country. A considerable number of arms, some artillery, and ample stores of ammunition

⁴⁷ It will surely be unnecessary to vindicate this illustrious personage against the aspersions of a late writer, who does not even hesitate to accuse him of treachery. (Vid. Wood's View of the History of Switzerland, p. ii. c. 14.) None but this writer have represented him in that disgraceful light; and all others agree in bestowing the most unqualified encomium on his truly patriotic spirit, and heroic exertions.

and

and provisions, together with a treasure of about one hundred and sixty thousand pounds sterling, had, early in this year, been sent into the impregnable retreats of Hasli and the Oberland, as a depot in case of emergency. Thither Erlach resolved to speed his way, still hoping that he might collect a force sufficient to preserve some remnants of the now shattered republic. Being arrived at Musingen, about midway between Berne and Thun, he was recognized by some straggling soldiers, who immediately seized, tied, and placed him on a cart, meaning to convey him to Berne; but another party of infuriated soldiers and peasants soon after met the escort, fell upon the unhappy victim, and amid horrid screams and execrations, struck him with their hatchets and bayonets, and dispatched him. His wretched widow escaped a similar fate merely by a stupor, which for a time bereaved her of her senses. She took refuge in a solitude at the upper extremity of the lake of Thun. The assassins having, on the following day, been interrogated concerning the motives of this atrocious deed, owned that some Frenchmen had shewn them letters which they assured them came from Erlach, in which he promised to betray his country, and to facilitate the defeat of his army. Mr. Mallet du Pan asserts
this

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this fact on indubitable authority, and at the same time records many instances of the devoted heroism of individuals, and especially of women and young girls, who fell in the several encounters. A senator blew out his brains rather than survive the freedom of his country; and upon the whole nothing appears more evident, than that the fall of the confederacy can by no means be ascribed to the degeneracy of the people.

Oppressive
Conduct of
the French.

The acts of violence exercised by the French soldiers in the city of Berne, were perhaps not more excessive than might have been expected from an army circumstanced like theirs: but the outrages committed in the surrounding villages, which they alleged were not included in the capitulation, far exceed what is usually related concerning the atrocities of a conquering army. Private insults however, soon made way for public depredations. Brune proceeded without delay to the seizures, which there is little doubt were the real motive of the aggression.⁴⁸ The public treasury, containing the accumulation of above a century of perfect

⁴⁸ That these treasures were wanted, and actually applied, towards fitting out the Egyptian expedition, is a report corroborated by the coincidence of dates, and confirmed by the public avowal of the commissary Rouhieres, published in several of the French papers.

tranquillity,

tranquillity, prosperity, and strict economy,⁴⁹ the public store-houses and granaries, the arsenal, and whatever could be extorted from the patrician families, were all sequestered as a forfeit for the resistance that had been made, and carried away chiefly to Hunningen. Twenty millions of livres, three hundred cannon, forty thousand stand of arms, all the utensils for the foundry of cannon, were the principal articles of the rich booty : and the general having received intelligence of the depots that had been newly formed in the Oberland, succeeded by threats and promises, to obtain possession of this valuable accumulation. But, what the Swiss a few weeks before would have deemed an impossibility ; and what, had it been offered, would have been resisted with the utmost rage and indignation,—*the nation was disarmed.*⁵⁰


The terror of the French arms, far more than any grievances the people laboured under, soon spread riot and confusion throughout the cantons not yet subdued. At Zurich, even the pro-

New
Changes
at Zurich.

⁴⁹ Eight hundred thousand louis in specie were said to have been found in this treasury ; but this sum, there is reason to believe, was considerably exaggerated.

⁵⁰ *Le desarmement des habitans se continue dans toutes les parties de la Suisse occupée par les Français.* Vid. Monit. April the 5th. Some accounts say that the orders for this disarmament were not strictly executed.

visionary

CHAP. X.  visionary government which had been established by the insurgents, could not prevent the further progress of faction and anarchy. On the seventh of March their Prefect Wyss arrived with the news of the surrender of Berne; and none doubted that the period was now come when they also were to experience all the horrors of subjugation. The impending calamity produced a hasty accommodation among the contending parties. On the tenth they deposed the newly elected magistracy, and instituted a regency still provisional, but verging still more towards the unlimited forms of a pure democracy. All parties now congratulated each other on the return of their perfect unanimity; and sent to Mengaud and Brune this peace-offering of a new constitution, founded upon the immutable principles of liberty and perfect equality; and to request the friendship of France, and implore that no French troops might be sent upon their territories.

Conduct of
the small
Cantons.

The conduct of the small cantons, though in the end it availed them not, was yet far more consistent and dignified. The deputies of Schwitz, Uri, Underwalden, Zug, and Glaris, met at Brunen, the spot where, after the glorious day of Morgarten, their ancestors had solemnly sworn to the perpetual confederacy, and

and unanimously resolved to resist every attempt to introduce innovations among them. Appenzel, St. Gallen, and other small districts, were invited to accede, and they ostensibly complied. This firm determination was, no doubt, strengthened by motives of religion, which in the French nomenclature is scornfully denominated fanaticism. But, in fact, these plain unperverted shepherds, who feared God, and hence honoured those whom they deemed his ministers, saw distinctly that they could gain nothing by a revolution: they knew theirs to be the purest democracy that could possibly be effected, and they were conscious that they were the freest people upon earth. They deprecated a representative government, which ever has a bias towards aristocracy, and which they were aware would necessarily imply certain stipends; and they well knew that their very existence depended upon an absolute exemption from even the most moderate imposts. Their incorporation with neighbouring districts, they were persuaded would necessarily disturb the simplicity of their patriarchal governments; and hence they unanimously decided against the adoption of the indivisible republic, the project of which had already been dispersed among them. A declaration to this purpose, conceived in moderate but ener

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getic terms, was dispatched to the French general. They received an answer expressive of friendship, and declaring that the French had no intention to molest them: but at the same time, an intimation was given them, that it was expected they would accept the new form of government, which it was determined should extend throughout Helvetia.

Brune, being apprized of the rooted aversion the democratic cantons harboured against a republic one and indivisible, promoted a plan, suggested by Castelaar, a citizen of Friburg, and Mangourit and Desportes, French residents, the former in the Valais, and the latter at Geneva, for the distribution of all Helvetia into three distinct commonwealths, the Rhodane, the Helvetian, and the Tellgauan.⁵¹ This partition however, it was soon observed, would have been liable to the main objection which had long been thought the principal blemish of the former constitution, *the want of a centre of union to combine all the parts, and direct them to one object.* Perhaps the project was a mere pretence to elicit the demand of an indivisible compact, which, being once held out as the basis of the new Helvetic constitution, would authorize the armed protectors of it to penetrate

⁵¹ Rhætia did not yet enter into the plans of the French revolutionaries.

into

into the remotest corners of the country, where any opposition might be attempted against its establishment. Brune accordingly repealed the proclamation which enacted the three-fold governments that had already been organized in the Rhodane district, and issued orders for a meeting at Arau, of a national legislative assembly of the Helvetic republic one and indivisible. This was the last public act of Brune in Helvetia. Satiated with blood and plunder, he repaired to Italy, to gather new laurels in the field of revolutionary conquest. He left Berne on the twenty-eighth of March; and the military command devolved on general Schawenburg, the officer who, when the Austrians, having surprised Kehl, were forcing the bridge across the Rhine, hastily collected a party of burghers of Strasburg, and with signal intrepidity repulsed the assailants. The civil power was vested in the hands of executive commissaries, who came with orders to organize Helvetia according to the new constitution: and here particularly begins the period of humiliation this inoffending people were destined to endure. Men of moderation and rectitude now asked; 'Where is this boasted independence the French government has so repeatedly pledged itself to insure to the Helvetic nation? What freedom has a people that is not allowed to

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‘ form its own constitution ; and is a stranger likely to be better acquainted than the people themselves, what constitution is best suited to their local, moral, and political circumstances?’ The words ‘ oligarchy and fanaticism, which must be crushed,’ were general answers to these incontrovertible positions.

Le Carlier was the first commissary. ‘ It is you,’ he intimated in his first proclamation, ‘ who must maintain your generous deliverers.’ This extortionary maxim he indeed qualified by admitting that none but members of the former regencies should be made to contribute towards the indispensable subsidies. Meanwhile, without instituting any inquiry into the condition and circumstances of individuals, he seized horses, cattle, grain, and all manner of provisions, wherever he could meet with them ; and the word *requisition*, was now for the first time introduced into the Helvetic vocabulary.

March 29. In a second proclamation he ordained the unconditional acceptance of the new constitution framed at Paris, and of late published in French and German ; and into which no corrections, such as even Ochs, its reputed author, and other revolutionary patriots, had suggested, were suffered to be introduced.

The new
Constitution.
1791.

This constitution, consisting of twelve articles, divided the whole country, including Rhætia

Rhætia (which it was now decreed should likewise be compelled into the indivisible union) into twenty-two departments, each of which was to send four senators and eight counsellors, to the legislative assembly at Arau. By these a periodical choice was to be made of five directors, to whom the executive power was to be committed. Provision was to be made for a standing army, and also for the organization of a national militia, to be called together as occasion might require. The representatives of ten departments⁵² met at Arau, under the protection of twelve hundred French grenadiers, and on the twelfth of April accepted and proclaimed this constitution. Twelve departments either hesitated, or positively rejected the summons; and yet the report to the directory at Paris was, that the nation had with great exultation celebrated the accomplishment of this happy revolution.

Geneva, about this time under the influence of Desportes, of a blockade, of an impending famine, and of fifteen hundred French soldiers, who, instead of marching through as had been previously agreed, established themselves in the

Geneva
united to
France.

⁵² Argau, Basle, Berne, Friburg, Lemán, Lucern, Oberland, Schaffhausen, Soleure, and Zurich. All the eastern parts of Switzerland were not obstinately averse to the proposed innovation.

city,

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city, appointed commissioners, who, after due deliberation, declared that great deference ought to be paid to the wishes of the great nation. The terms of an union, recommended by Desportes, were soon adjusted, and were formally accepted on the twenty-sixth of April; and thus ended the independence of this ever convulsive republic. The French agent wrote next day to the directory, that Geneva was in raptures at this happy change; and that the Genevan branch was now worthy to figure in the fasces of the great republic. He immediately dissolved two Jacobin clubs: they had been useful; but they might now prove dangerous.

War
against the
small Can-
tons.

The resolute determination evinced by the small cantons to abide by their ancient, free, democratic, and happy constitution, could by no means accord with the system of uniformity, into which, like the tyrant Procrustes, the French directory had resolved to model all the governments that fell within their grasp. This resistance was therefore at any rate to be surmounted; and Schawenburg, preparatory to the coercive measures he meant to take, published a declaration, strictly prohibiting all intercourse with the six small eastern cantons, St. Gallen, and the smaller districts, and cutting off all supplies they had been accustomed to receive

April 13.

receive from the neighbouring more fertile regions. This, as in the war of Zurich in the fifteenth century, was a death-blow to these indigent shepherds, whose pastures affording them only cattle, milk, and cheese, left them destitute of many articles most necessary to their subsistence. The general entertained no doubt that this step would soon enforce compliance: and yet not many days elapsed, before he found that he had been totally mistaken in his conjecture; this insulted people shewing a firm resolution not only to endure the horrors of distress and famine, if unavoidable, but even to counteract his inhuman purposes, by forcing a way into the neighbouring valleys, and perhaps, should fortune favour their valour, to turn the tide of affairs in this degraded country, where the practical comparison between the comforts the people had once enjoyed, and the vexations to which they were now incessantly exposed, had already excited general discontent. The French commander who reports this first aggression (the aggression of men whom without the least provocation he had resolved to starve) intimates, that the plan of these rude mountaineers was to make themselves masters of Lucern and Zurich, and thence to fall into the Argau, depose the directory, disperse the assembly, and thus bring

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about a counter-revolution, in which he is confident, from the language held by the arch-fiend Pitt in the British parliament, and the frequent clandestine visits of Mallet du Pan at Zurich, that they expected to be effectually succoured by foreign powers.

April 28.

Mere defensive measures could now in fact no longer relieve this injured people; and nothing but a vigorous excursion could redress the sufferings under which they laboured. Accordingly they, without delay, advanced in two columns, the one on the right of the lake of Zurich to Rapperswyl and Feldbach, and the other on the left to the village of Richtenswyl, both threatening a joint attack on the city of Zurich. On the next day another column proceeded to the gates of Lucern, where, after declaring their intentions to be friendly and peaceable, they summoned the garrison, which instantly capitulated. They had not been long in the city, where they committed several excesses, before a report was spread that a French force was rapidly advancing. They hereupon evacuated the place, and withdrew to Kusnacht, between the lakes of Zug and Lucern.

April 30.

The French general having been well apprized of these several movements, sent two columns, under the generals Nouvion and Jordy, the one to Zurich, and the other to Zug, which

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which latter having reached its destination, was immediately presented with the keys of the city. On the same day a French detachment also entered Ludern, and even obtained possession of the strong post at Kusnacht. Schawenburg came now himself to Zurich, and directed the march of two columns, which immediately advanced on each side of the lake. The one on the left having reached the walls of

May 1.

Rapperswyl, heard a cry that the town was willing to surrender; upon which they ceased hostilities, and were advancing without caution towards the gates, when a battalion of Unterwalden suddenly fired upon their rear, and threw them into some confusion. A severe conflict now ensued, in which the French were at first repulsed; but returning to the charge, they stormed the town and took it.

S. 1012

A combat far more obstinate and destructive was at the same time fought on the opposite side of the lake. The French column which advanced along that shore, commanded by general Fressinet, encountered upwards of five thousand Swiss, occupying an advantageous post beyond Richterswyl. The French attacked with their wonted fury, but were, at the first onset, repulsed into the village. Having been joined by four additional companies, they returned

CHAP. turned to the charge with redoubled ardour,
 X. soon regained their position, and, after a six
 hours struggle, they, with the aid of some ar-
 tillery, at length overpowered their obstinate
 opponents. The French commander acknow-
 ledged that this was the most severe conflict he
 had ever witnessed, and 'that every Swiss sol-
 'dier fought like a Cæsar.' Above three hun-
 dred Swiss fell in the field: three of their offi-
 cers perished under their banner. Colonel
 Paravicini, who led on the men of Glaris, hav-
 ing been severely wounded, quitted the field,
 and with his followers retired into his valley.
 The Schwitzers under colonel Reding retreated
 step by step, incessantly contending with their
 May 2. relentless foe. On the subsequent day, they
 stood another conflict; and at length, repelled
 though not discomfited, they took refuge among
 their mountains. Above four hundred Swiss
 fell in these arduous combats. Twenty peasants
 armed with clubs had taken shelter in a house:
 they were offered pardon if they would swear
 to the constitution; but they scornfully re-
 jected the offer. The house was set on fire;
 and they all perished in the flames. The regret
 and commiseration expressed on this occasion
 by general Schawenburg in his dispatch to the
 Helvetic directory, will no doubt excite sorrow
 and

and compassion; but it will probably call to mind the proverbial simile of the tears of crocodiles.

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On the last-mentioned day, the French column under Fressinet, after having pillaged and burnt several villages, arrived at Einsiedlen. They found the abbey deserted by all the monks, the only excepted, and stripped of all its treasures; the image of the Virgin alone remaining, which it was expected would work miracles against the infidels. It was sent to Paris as a companion to the Madonna of Loretto; and general Schawenburg ordered the stately abbey, which had been considered as the principal seat of superstition and fanaticism in this country, to be demolished.

Short and separate truces were now concluded; and an accommodation soon after took place between the French general and the cantons of Schwitz and Glaris. These latter ad-

<sup>53</sup> Les amis de la cause commune ne peuvent que gémir sur les mesures qu'il a fallu employer pour obtenir nos succès. Le sang d'une multitude d'habitans simples et confians des campagnes, des pères de famille égarés, arrachés à la charrue, et entraînés au combat, a coulé. Des épouses éplorées; des enfans abandonnés, des pères et mères vieux et infirmes ont à pleurer la perte de leurs soutiens et de leurs appuis. Gaz. Leyd. May 25.

\* It has since been ascertained that the Monks carried off the miraculous image.

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X  
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accepted the new constitution on condition that they should retain their arms and worship, be liable to no contributions, and that no French troops should come within their frontiers. These terms, far more favourable than any that had yet been granted, are a manifest proof of the impression the bravery of this people had made on the French commanders. Reding came as one of the deputies to Schayemburg. 'Had you fallen into my hands, I would have hanged you,' said the general. 'I would have done the same by you, if I had caught you,' answered Reding.

Zug had, on the day of the first encounter, accepted the constitution. Uri and Unterwalden acceded to certain terms, the particulars of which have never been distinctly known.

The Valais
and Italian
Bailiwicks
surrender.

An insurrection in the Valais, fomented, probably by the clergy, who, it may be imagined, did not countenance the fanaticism of irreligion of which the French soldiers were the strenuous apostles, was productive of several bloody engagements, and, after a short siege, (in which an act of treachery is laid to the charge of the garrison) of the taking by storm and sacking the city of Sion. The whole district, after this, accepted the new constitution. The Italian bailiwicks, which till now had hesitated

sitated whether they should join the Cisalpine or Helvetic republic, declared at length for the latter: and thus, except the Grison country, which as yet had not felt the impression, either of the persuasions or the arms of the invaders, and the bishoprick of Basle, and the cities of Mulhausen and Geneva, which had been incorporated in the great commonwealth, the whole of what had a few months ago composed a powerful and independent state, became a republic, one and indivisible, under the arbitrary control of five foreign dictators, who had nothing less at heart than the prosperity of this once happy country.

Le Carlier, whether he had not enforced his orders with sufficient rigour, or that an intrigue at Paris prevailed against him, saw himself in the beginning of May, recalled from Switzerland, and soon after placed at the head of a ministerial department. Previous to his leaving the country however, he exacted a contribution of fifteen millions of livres, to be raised, indeed, on the patrician families, but for which the towns assessed were made responsible.⁵⁴ Large

⁵⁴ Berne six, Friburg two, Soleure two, Lucern two, and Zurich three millions. One instance is upon record how these contributions, which were pretended to be laid only on the governing families, must have operated on the public at large. The chamber of administration of Friburg, observing

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Rapinat
Commissary.

sums were also imposed on the principal abbays; and he ordered a strict inquisition to be made into the public funds, charitable as well as municipal, of all the corporations over which his power extended. He was succeeded by Rapinat, brother in law to the director Rewbel, whose rapacity has been represented in the most odious colours. He began his administration by causing seals to be affixed to all the public treasuries of Berne, Zurich, and Lucern; even those out of which the casual necessities of the people were usually supplied, and the poor, the sick, and the orphans received their maintenance: and ordering the seals which the Helvetic government had fixed upon them to be torn off, he declared that these capitals were all to be considered as the sole property of the French republic.⁵⁵ He also issued

observing that the families which had been rated could not possibly raise the amount of the contributions, ordered that all citizens possessed of ready money, should advance the same upon the security of the canton. Plate and all manner of effects were collected for the purpose; and probably the impossibility of enforcing the full payment, compelled the French commissaries to modify the sum: some of the contributions were even in the sequel wholly remitted. Vid. Monit. May 6.

⁵⁵ On the fifth of June, Rapinat, a sub-commissary, and Roubiere, came with an armed force and demanded the keys of the public treasure at Zurich. The magistrates having refused, Rapinat appealed to his bayonets, and sent

for

orders for accumulating requisitions, and for CHAP.
still further contributions to be levied on the X
reduced patrician families.

The period was now arrived when this coun- Deplorable
State of
Helvetia.
try, drained of its specie, provisions, and ne-
cessaries, and kept in awe by an arbitrary pro-
consul, a numerous and expensive army, and
the relentless passions of its own aspiring and
ungrateful demagogues, could not but be re-
duced to a state of the most abject humiliation.
Those, therefore, will hardly find credit who
assert (and some there are who have asserted)
that Switzerland, upon the whole, at this time,
enjoyed great tranquillity, and a considerable
share of political felicity: while, in fact, the
unhappy victims of lawless power were awed
into silence by the summary justice exerted
against them by the ministers of liberty, equa-
lity, humanity, and the inalienable rights of
men. Perhaps, in this state of things, no true
account would ever have been obtained of the
real condition of the country, had we not some
public testimonies, which the most obstinate
incredulity will hardly know how to reject.

The venerable, intrepid, and humane, though Lavater's
Philippic.
at times enthusiastic Lavater, who in this in-

for a smith, who broke open the locks. On the eighth, the
treasure was loaded on waggon's to be conveyed away. The
removal however, it appears, was countermanded.

CHAP. stance may well be admitted as a competent
 x. evidence, having himself, in the early stage of
 the innovating system, inclined in favour of a
 reformation in his canton, thought himself now
 called upon to state to the French directory,
 and, having obtained no redress from that
 quarter, to proclaim to the world at large, the
 heavy calamities the French had inflicted upon
 his unhappy country.*

‘What has been the motive,’ he asks in the
 name of all his countrymen, ‘of the heavy
 ‘wars the French have of late carried on
 ‘against the most powerful sovereigns of Eu-
 ‘rope? What! but to prevent those sovereigns
 ‘from interfering in their own internal affairs.
 ‘Neither their splendid triumphs, nor the pre-
 ‘ponderancy of their power, ought surely,
 ‘therefore, without their grossly belying their
 ‘own principles, to prompt them to direct our
 ‘domestic concerns, and to compel our obe-
 ‘dience by hostile means. It is a law coeval
 ‘with the world, written in every heart, and en-
 ‘forced by every decree, *not to do to others*
 ‘*what we wish not to have done to ourselves.*
 ‘What would the French therefore say were
 ‘we, being the strongest, to prescribe to them

* This letter, repeatedly printed in different languages,
 bears date Zurich, May 10, 1798, the first year of the Helvetic
 SLAVERY.

‘a consti-



' a constitution, enforce it by the bayonet, de-
 ' mand enormous contributions, lead away their
 ' treasures, the funds destined for the relief of
 ' their poor, their artillery, their arms, their
 ' ammunition, and degraded them into a state of
 ' the most abject servitude? And yet all this
 ' you, with the sounding words of liberty, equa-
 ' lity, justice, and loyalty, in your mouths,
 ' have done to us. Ye came as robbers, as ty-
 ' rants against a people that had never offended
 ' you, under pretence of freeing us from aris-
 ' tocracy, or what you emphatically reprobate
 ' as an insufferable oligarchy: you have im-
 ' posed a yoke upon us more intolerable than
 ' the most severe oppressions we have ever en-
 ' dured: never, during our former *vicious* go-
 ' vernment, have we been commanded in so
 ' despotic a manner as since you have conferred
 ' liberty upon us. LIBERTY, EQUALITY, are
 ' words which grace the head of your edicts;
 ' and then follows, "*The commander in chief*
 " *orders you under severe penalties, &c.*"

' When you entered the Helvetic territories
 ' you proclaimed that your sole object was to
 ' punish the oligarchies of Berne, Friburg, and
 ' Soleure. The other cantons believed you,
 ' and, to their shame be it told, looked on with
 ' passive indifference. Zurich complied with
 ' all you seemed to require; it reduced its go-

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‘ vernment into a pure democratic form : and
 ‘ yet you came and ordered us to accept a new
 ‘ constitution. We silently acquiesced : a few
 ‘ days after, as if to sport with our submission,
 ‘ you abruptly ordered us to accept another
 ‘ constitution, still less adapted than the former
 ‘ to our peculiar circumstances ; and of this,
 ‘ in the language of a robber, *Your money or*
 ‘ *your life*, you enjoined the acceptance, leaving
 ‘ us no other *liberty* but that of obeying your
 ‘ high commands.

‘ We now thought we had accomplished all
 ‘ your arbitrary mandates ; and that, consist-
 ‘ ently with your repeated promises, no troops
 ‘ of yours should enter upon our territories.
 ‘ Vain hope ! you came with an armed force,
 ‘ which you quartered upon our citizens and
 ‘ peasants. You drained our unhappy coun-
 ‘ try, and, to crown our humiliation, you im-
 ‘ posed a contribution of three millions of livres
 ‘ upon our senatorial families ; the families who,
 ‘ for ages, had constitutionally held the reins
 ‘ of government, and held them without any
 ‘ imputation of abuse or peculation, certainly
 ‘ without extortion ; who now made no strug-
 ‘ gle to maintain the exclusive authority our
 ‘ constitution had vested in them, and against
 ‘ whom therefore you could not possibly bring
 ‘ any well-founded charge. The *liberty* you
 ‘ conferred

‘ conferred on us in return for all these exactions, was the privilege of parting ultimately with our inestimable freedom. Does the man who kills a robber who demands my purse, and then strips me naked, deserve my thanks? Ten thousand of your brave warriors declare openly that your treatment of us is infamous. *Infamous!* what a word applied to the Great Nation! and yet were any other nation, without any ground but preponderancy of power, to proceed against you in the same manner you do to others, what words of more bitter execration would not your glowing eloquence invent, to express your indignation!’

With such heavy allegations and reproachful inferences, but in a language far more impressive, does this bold patriot arraign the conduct of the French towards his country. There are some perhaps who will be guarded against the flights of his glowing imagination; these we shall refer to a public document of a far more authentic nature, the official remonstrance of the Swiss representative at Paris, B. Zeltner, a man of revolutionary principles, who addressed to the minister of foreign affairs a note, which, for ambiguous language, fulsome adulation, and yet severe reproach and urgent solicitation, has perhaps scarcely its equal. The

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X.Zeltner's
Remon-
strance.

first period points out the spirit of the performance.

‘ The minister plenipotentiary of the Hel-
 ‘ vetic republic fulfils the first and most pleasing
 ‘ of the duties imposed on him by his consti-
 ‘ tuents, in testifying to the Great Nation, and
 ‘ to its constituted authorities, their gratitude
 ‘ for the benefit conferred on them, of a con-
 ‘ stitution founded on the principles of liberty
 ‘ and equal rights. Could the Helvetian re-
 ‘ publicans have recovered their indefeasible
 ‘ rights without being deprived of all the means
 ‘ of enjoying them, the gratitude they now pro-
 ‘ fess would know no bounds.

‘ Intimately connected with the French na-
 ‘ tion during many centuries, by all the ties of
 ‘ mutual esteem, by the intercourse of com-
 ‘ merce, and treaties founded upon reciprocal
 ‘ advantages, the Helvetic people would with
 ‘ rapture still be its faithful ally, its friend, and
 ‘ its admirer, did not too many sufferings attend
 ‘ their political regeneration. Is it then writ-
 ‘ ten in the book of destiny, that the noble gift
 ‘ of freedom must be purchased at the price of
 ‘ every kind of oppression which can afflict a
 ‘ people?’

These sufferings and these oppressions he
 next paints in colours which must excite com-
 passion.

passion, if not horror. ‘ When, in conferring
 ‘ freedom on a people,’ he continues, ‘ you
 ‘ clothe it in the rags of misery; when you
 ‘ compel it to exchange its gay and genuine
 ‘ felicity for gloomy dejectedness, and all man-
 ‘ ner of vexation; when the husbandman fore-
 ‘ goes his plough, and the artist both his work
 ‘ and implements; when the virtuous and
 ‘ peaceful citizen is stript of his property; and
 ‘ all his rights are trampled upon, you have, O
 ‘ Great Nation! you have missed your aim.
 ‘ *England triumphs.*

‘ They are not empty declamations, not
 ‘ vague alarms, which the Helvetic minister
 ‘ here lays before you. He undertook the so-
 ‘ lemn obligation to tear asunder an odious
 ‘ veil. He will fulfil his duty with the frank-
 ‘ ness and simplicity that has always been the
 ‘ characteristic of the nation he represents; and
 ‘ with a heart that beats only for liberty, he will
 ‘ adduce facts, and establish them upon incon-
 ‘ testable evidence.’

After specifying more particularly some of
 the most atrocious cruelties practised by the
 French substitutes, the minister proceeds :
 ‘ The consequences of so irritating a conduct
 ‘ against a people, not distracted by pleasures,
 ‘ nor to be awed by force, though it may be
 ‘ guided by gentle means, are indeed alarming.

‘ It

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‘ It is exceedingly impolitic not to study their
‘ character more attentively. This brave, but
‘ headstrong people, adhere firmly to their reli-
‘ gion, to their democracy, and to their ancient
‘ manners. Whatever bears the semblance of in-
‘ fidelity or outrage, revolts their honest minds,
‘ and fills them with indignation. When they
‘ have nothing more to lose, when urged by
‘ despair, they will yield themselves up to every
‘ excess; and Helvetia may become the theatre
‘ of scenes far more horrible than those of the
‘ Vendée. The writer trembles in using this
‘ language, but it is his duty to use it. Not to
‘ reveal the whole truth to the French directory
‘ were an unpardonable offence.’

The nature of the grievances he complains of may be gathered from the articles of redress he demands in the name of his republic. These were, the replacing of all the public funds, which had been seized and carried away; a repeal of the contributions laid on without the least respect to the abilities of the contributors; the return of the artillery, arms, ammunition, and, in a word, all that the French had purloined from the Swiss; an immediate reduction of the French army in Switzerland, especially the cavalry, and that what remained should be quartered in barracks; and lastly, that the agents of the French republic, as well

as the commanders of the French troops, should be instructed to concert their measures with the Helvetic government, to act only in its name, and with its approbation.

Should proofs still more authentic of the sufferings and discontents of the people be required, recourse may be had to the formal declarations of their chief magistrates and representatives, whose language is too decisive to admit of any doubt or cavil. The Helvetic directors, in a letter to the commissary Rapinat, after particularizing several grievances, proceed in these words: ‘ We cannot persuade ourselves that the directory of the Great Nation, which has declared itself our friend, will consent to see us reduced to the condition of the poorest, the most feeble, the most wretched of people. No, citizen commissary! the French government did not decree our ruin, when it resolved to confer liberty upon us. It disdains the ungenerous fraud of an ambitious policy, which bestows the name of friend on those it crushes. Our sufferings must be great indeed, since our remonstrances become so frequent.’

After a sufficient time had elapsed for some reparation of the evils complained of in the preceding remonstrances, the same directory writes to general Schawemburg; ‘ We are compelled
May 30.
‘ to

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‘ to apprise you, citizen general, that the excesses of all sorts with which the troops oppress our countrymen, the heavy requisitions and exactions of all kinds, which the people are unable to satisfy, have occasioned so universal a discontent, that, according to the reports received this day from all the subordinate magistrates, the general despair has risen to the highest pitch. Citizen general! Helvetia and Genoa have formerly owed their liberty to the excess of their misfortunes, and to the *immoderate use of victory*.
 ‘ Perfidy alone can tell you that our ills are exaggerated.’ Schawenburg, in answer to this letter, expressed great surprise; declared that he had ordered all excesses of his troops to be severely punished; but intimated that he had much to recriminate. The directory in their reply, after discussing the points in debate, concludes, ‘ It must indeed be a great triumph to the aristocracy, to compare the prosperity of the Swiss before the revolution⁵⁷ with the misfortunes they now experience. It, no doubt, calculates the degrees of calamity this

⁵⁷ Even general Schawenburg, on sailing up the lake of Zurich, and observing the borders luxuriant in culture and industry and with every mark of prosperity, could not help exclaiming, ‘ *Il est cependant difficile de retrouver ici les traits du despotisme.*’ Vide *Monit.* June the third.

‘ people

' people may yet sustain before it arrives at ab-
 ' solute, and the most horrid, despair. Your
 ' troops will not be confined to barracks; they
 ' choose rather to live in private houses, the
 ' owners of which they vex and insult, and
 ' from whom they snatch even the last morsel
 ' of bread; while the unhappy sufferers, who,
 ' as well as the administration to which they
 ' look up for protection, have nothing left but
 ' the privilege of making ineffectual com-
 ' plaints; and can neither offer nor obtain any
 ' alleviation, having been stripped of the funds
 ' destined for the relief of the distressed. We
 ' appeal to the justice, and to the generosity, of
 ' the French republic. We formally claim the
 ' execution of the solemn promises it has made
 ' to our nation and to all the friends of li-
 ' berty.'²⁸

So far from any redress being obtained to
 these repeated and urgent representations, a May 13.
 decree of the French directory invested the
 commissary Rapinat, the principal author of
 the depredations complained of, ' with all the
 ' powers civil, political, and financial, with all
 ' the competency, and to the full extent that
 ' might be requisite for the interests of the
 ' French republic:' and this decree was strict-
 ly enforced by that rapacious delegate; who

²⁸ Vid. Monit. July the sixth.

formally



June 16.

formally declared to the Helvetic legislative assembly, 'that they were no more than a board of administration subordinate to the French government.' About a month after, he wrote a peremptory letter to the assembly, urging the necessity of making certain reforms in the constituted authorities of Switzerland; advising that two of the directors, Bay and Pfeiffer, and some inferior members of the administration, be required to resign their offices, and recommending the introduction of Ochs and Dolder into the directory. On the eighteenth of the same month he proceeded so far as to annul all the powers of the public authorities, and to declare what nearly amounted to martial law. 'If it be true,' he says, 'that Switzerland is hitherto a conquest of the French army, it is no less certain, that it belongs to the agents of the French government to direct all the operations civil, political, and financial, which are to be carried on in Helvetia.' The principal cause of these conflicts appears to have been the seizure of the public treasuries, and the funds for charitable purposes, which the Swiss government represented the necessity of retaining in order to preserve their country, incessantly exposed to the catastrophes of nature, from absolute destruction. The Helvetic government had caused the seal of their republic to be affixed

fixed to the public chests that still remained in the country, and even ventured so far as to cause those which Rapinat had added to them to be torn off without his participation. On this occasion the enraged commissary repeated his declaration, 'that the Swiss had now no property but what belonged to the French republic;' and he actually once more ordered the treasury of Zurich to be conveyed away.

The transactions which now followed were so unexpected, contradictory, and seemingly inconsistent with the principles of the French government, that it will be in vain as yet to offer any conjectures concerning them, or any clue to unravel the intrigues that probably gave rise to them. The late rigorous letter of Rapinat was on a sudden disapproved, and declared void by a decree of the French directory. He was himself appointed to the office of commissary at Mentz, and Rudler was named to succeed him in Helvetia. Whether it was meant to allure the unsuspecting Swiss into a display of sentiments which might furnish a handle for future severity, certain it is, that the rejoicings, not only in the legislative bodies, but throughout the country, were manifest indications of the abhorrence entertained by the people of the oppressions and insults they had hitherto experienced; and expressed the sanguine

Rapinat
displaced
and rein-
stated.

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guine hopes they entertained that, under the influence of a milder administration, they should still be preserved from absolute annihilation. Thus impressed, what must have been their terror and dismay, when, eight days after, they were officially informed by general Schawemburg, that Rapinat was to continue in his station, and that the powers vested in him were no ways diminished! Strange to relate, this reinstatement was now called a happy reconciliation. The directors Bay and Pfeiffer, who in consequence of the preceding removal of the commissary had resumed their stations, once more resigned, and Ochs and Dolder⁵⁹ were reinstated by Rapinat. The senate declared its satisfaction on receiving from general Schawemburg the happy tidings that the French directory had continued the depositary of their authority in his former station. Ochs was installed in the directory by the French general Mounier. Congratulatory speeches,⁶⁰ festivals, the discharge of artillery, illuminations, succeeded; and the people, aghast and confounded at the mysterious alterations, partook

⁵⁹ The election of Dolder was soon after annulled, and La Harpe appointed in his place.

⁶⁰ Ochs in his speech extolled above all others the virtue of gratitude, and reminded his audience of the great benefits they received from the French republic.

of



of the rejoicings, though they knew not whence they arose, nor what they portended.

Whatever brought on these rapid changes, or may have been their immediate effects, it must be owned, that no loud complaints, or even feeble remonstrances, were for a certain interval heard either from the constituted authorities, or from the people at large : some reparations were even made for former injuries. Whether the spirit of the people had been effectually curbed, or whether the French government, unwilling to harass and perplex any longer a people that was now prostrate at their feet, inclined to lenity, we hear of no instances which might call for animadversion, until the act which crowned all former oppressions, and which, by the extermination of a people, completed the reduction of Helvetia.

The small democratic cantons, and particularly those of Uri and Unterwalden, had notwithstanding the losses they had sustained in their late encounters, obtained terms which ill-accorded with the system of unity or rather of perfect subjugation which appears throughout to have been the plan of the French government. Nor could they patiently endure that the passes over Mount St. Gothard and through the Grison country, which now connected several of their dependent republics, should not

The Unterwalders assailed.

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be solely and absolutely in their power. Never have they been wanting in pretences to assail a people, though ever so inoffensive, whenever their interest or lust of power urged them to the attack. In the present instance, a civic oath binding the whole nation to the new constitution, was proposed or rather ordained by the French general and commissary, who at the same time alleged that, as this constitution had been solemnly accepted by the legislative body, it became necessary to impose on each individual the obligation of adhering to it. The three small cantons on the lake of Lucern, and the canton of Zug, unwilling to admit any closer connection with the government, the effects of which did not appear to them in the least inviting, and not as yet accustomed to sport with the sanctity of an oath, resolutely refused to comply with the ordinance. The general sent them a threatening message; and the new Helvetic directory exhorted them to compliance, intimating the great danger to which they should expose themselves, if they persisted in their contumacy. Schawenburg added to this exhortation, in his own handwriting; ‘ If the people of the forest cantons
‘ do not immediately comply with the above
‘ requisition, I shall instantly lead the army
‘ under my orders into the *rebellious districts*,
‘ and



‘ and shall inflict a severe and exemplary punishment on all the refractory.’

It must affect all whose hearts are not become callous by the practice of revolutionary *virtues*, to read the artless; but surely pathetic, answer made by these simple shepherds. ‘ Receive, citizen general,’ they said, ‘ from a people ever true to their engagements, who among their craggy mountains have no comfort but their religion, and their liberty, whose only riches is their cattle; receive the sincere assurance that they will ever give to the French republic all the proofs of their devotedness, compatible with their liberty and independence. Accept also, citizen general, our solemn promise never to take up arms against the Great Republic, and never to join its enemies. Our liberty is our only blessing; nor will any thing ever induce us to grasp our arms, except our duty to defend that liberty!’⁶¹

⁶¹ ‘ Quid nobis tecum est?’ said the Scythian ambassadors who came to deprecate the invasion of Alexander, ‘ nunquam terram tuam adtigimus. Qui sis, unde venias, licetne ignorare in vastis silvis viventibus? Nec servire ulli possumus, nec imperare desideramus. Dona a nobis data sunt, ne Scytharum gentem ignores, jugum boum, artrum, & sagitta, & patera. His utimur et cum amicis, & adversus inimicos: patera cum iisdem vinum diis libamus. Inimicos sagitta eminus, hasta cominus petimus.’ Quint.

Curt.

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Even now, when reduced to such small numbers, had these cantons firmly united in the support of their common cause, and favoured as they were by the asperity of their country, they might yet have offered some check to the overwhelming power to which the greatest monarchs have been compelled to yield. But even these, like the rest of their confederate states, like the sovereigns of Europe, had ceased to act in concert: by degrees all declined further opposition, except the small canton of Underwalden, which was left to make a fruitless struggle that ended in extermination. Schawemburg being apprized of their stubborn refusal, led forth his bands against them.

It is not because it comes from the ex-director Carnot, who were he now in office would doubtless hold a language diametrically opposite, but because it has all the appearance of being a faithful representation of the spirit which animated the French rulers, that we trespass upon our readers with the following extract. ‘The system of the directory is not equivocal for those who carefully observe its proceedings. It is to establish the national

Curt. lib. l. vii. c. 7. The reader, who will perhaps be struck with the resemblance in language and spirit, between this address and that of the illiterate shepherds of the Alps, will, we trust, not blame the insertion

power,

' power, less upon the real grandeur of the re-
 ' public, than upon the debility and final ruin
 ' of its neighbours : to engage them one by
 ' one ; to treat them as friends, as long as it is
 ' expedient to paralyze them, or to derive some
 ' succour from them ; and when the moment is
 ' arrived for crushing them, their fertile genius
 ' is never at a loss for pretences to realize, re-
 ' specting them, the fable of the wolf and the
 ' lamb. Of this, its conduct towards the small
 ' cantons of Switzerland is a glaring instance.
 ' It was no longer the Bernese oligarchy ; it
 ' was no longer those against whom they had
 ' such heavy charges to allege, namely, those
 ' who had a store of thirty millions and a mag-
 ' nificent arsenal ; it was the very children of
 ' William Tell, democrates, poor, scarcely con-
 ' nected with their neighbours. No matter ;
 ' they must be revolutionized : and hence the
 ' liberty which had afforded them five centuries
 ' of happiness, that liberty which had long been
 ' the envy of the French, is no longer the li-
 ' berty that becomes them. The alternative of
 ' a new constitution, or death, is offered them.
 ' The constitution which they thought less de-
 ' mocratic than their own, they reject. They
 ' must therefore be slaughtered ; for it is clear
 ' that nothing but intrigue and fanaticism can
 ' induce them to decline this pledge of their
 ' future

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‘ future felicity. To kill them is the best means
 ‘ to prevent their being any longer misled by
 ‘ intriguers and priests. And yet this handful
 ‘ of simple shepherds, who for three hundred
 ‘ years have experienced no hostility, dares to
 ‘ resist. Their republican blood is mingled
 ‘ with that of French republicans, not to de-
 ‘ fend jointly the sacred rights of men, but to
 ‘ exterminate each other. Impious war, &c.⁶²

And exter-
 minated.

We cannot surely be taxed with partiality, or
 exaggeration, if in relating this transaction, for
 which the reader will please to find a proper
 epithet, we transcribe the account given by the
 French general himself of his achievements.
 On the ninth of September, at six in the even-
 ing, he writes to the Helvetic directory : ‘ You
 ‘ will learn with pleasure, citizens directors, that
 ‘ victory continues faithful to the republicans.
 ‘ We have taken possession of the district of
 ‘ Stanz, after a combat which lasted from five
 ‘ in the morning to this moment. All that af-
 ‘ flicts me is that this day could not be termi-
 ‘ nated without all the consequences that must
 ‘ attend so severe a conflict ; for it has cost
 ‘ abundance of bloodshed. But *they were*
 ‘ *rebels whom it was necessary to subdue.*—
 ‘ Health and respect. — Schawenburg.’ It

⁶² Apology of Carnot, written by himself.

seems

seems then that it was an act of rebellion in these unfortunate men, to wish to preserve, among their native rocks, the cradle of liberty, an independence asserted by a series of heroic deeds, and handed down through many centuries to the present hapless generation ; an independence which never sought to obtrude itself upon others, but which was the pride, and constituted the chief happiness, of a brave, industrious, benevolent race, which, while it asserted its own rights, never molested a neighbour, nor caused a tear to flow from the eye of innocence.

On the tenth of September the general wrote more fully to general Jordy, commandant at Strasburg. ‘ You will learn with pleasure, my dear general, that we have defeated the rebels who had assembled in great numbers in the district of Stanz, where they had raised formidable ramparts. I could succeed no other way to envelope them than by sending round a column through the Oberwald. On the twenty-second Fructidor, I had secured the height of Mergesweil. As soon as all was ar-
 ‘ ranged for acting in concert, I directed, on the twenty-third at day-break, the generals
 ‘ Mainoni and Muller, to fall into the valley of Stanz, and attack the entrenchments. No sooner had these been carried by the bayonet,

p p 2

‘ than

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' than I ordered the infantry to embark on the
 ' lake, and to invest Stanz in the rear, which
 ' place was accordingly cannonaded on all sides
 ' with the greatest vigour. At six in the even-
 ' ing we were perfect masters of this unhappy
 ' country, the greatest part of which was pil-
 ' laged. The fury of the soldiers could not be
 ' restrained, for many of them had been taken
 ' by surprise and massacred. We have suf-
 ' fered greatly, which could not be avoided,
 ' considering the incredible obstinacy of these
 ' men, whose audacity bordered upon rage.
 ' Several priests, and unfortunately also many
 ' women, were cut to pieces. *In a word, all that*
 ' *bore arms was put to the sword.* We had
 ' about three hundred and fifty wounded.
 ' This was the warmest conflict I ever expe-
 ' rienced. Our enemies fought with iron
 ' wedges, with fragments of rocks : in short all
 ' imaginable means were used to destroy each
 ' other. A great number of the inhabitants of
 ' different cantons were witnesses of this fierce
 ' action : their countenances drooped as we ad-
 ' vanced. The whole district of Underwalden
 ' is now subdued. The papers we have in
 ' hand prove, that if we had not crushed these
 ' infatuated men, the insurrection would in a
 ' short time have become general. The Hel-
 ' vetic directory has demanded of me a military
 ' commission.

‘ commission. If your government consents to
 ‘ it, the principal agitators will meet with their
 ‘ condign punishment. We have taken twelve
 ‘ cannon, six colours, besides the arms of many
 ‘ individuals. Delpoint, the chief of brigade,
 ‘ has been wounded in the right arm. We have
 ‘ lost several officers.’

The following additional particulars are accurately transcribed from the narratives given by persons, who must have written and published under the sanction of the French government.⁶³ ‘ Underwalden gave birth to Arnold of Melchthal, one of the three heroes who, on the seventh of November, one thousand three hundred and seven, first raised the standard of liberty, and drove out the Austrian tyrants. From that day this liberty, and a perfect equality of conditions, were the fundamental principles of its popular government, and of the ancient constitution, in defence of which, the present generation have once more abundantly bled. It is then only in compliance with recent usage, which ascribes the name of republicans exclusively to the French armies, that general Schawenburg says, that *victory has continued true to the republicans*. According to private letters, he

⁶³ Leyden Gazette. Anno 1798. No. XL. and XLI.

‘ caused’

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caused the insurgents to be attacked at the same time on two sides : they defended themselves with an incredible obstinacy. The number of those who fell are estimated at about fifteen hundred. The town of Stanz has been burnt; and the inhabitants who have not perished in the battle or in the devastation, are reduced to the most deplorable misery. In Stanz, only sixteen houses are left standing. It was a large, handsome, pleasant, well built burgh, full of public and private edifices, well worthy of notice, all which are now converted into blazing ruins, steeped in the gore of their owners. The few of these unhappy owners who survived the carnage fled into the higher Alps, whither they had previously sent their women, children, and some of their valuable effects. Nothing so horrid as this obstinate combat. Men of all ages, women, and even children, fought without order, without able or experienced chiefs, against a host of well disciplined troops, supported by a numerous artillery. The action lasted thirteen hours without intermission, and with a rage of which there is scarcely any example. No one endowed with sensibility but must lament the accumulated evils that afflict this unhappy country, so worthy of a better fate.'

Such are the outlines of the transactions of

this unhappy day as related by the conquerors themselves. The wretched victims, at once oppressed, and at no time inclined to extol their own actions, have given us no detail to raise the opinion of the valour and constancy they displayed in the midst of this carnage and desolation, and to call forth the indignation of posterity. Were all the particulars, the heroic exertions, the cruelties, and deep distresses of this awful day, accurately recorded, what subjects might they not afford for the tragic Muse? But such is the rapid progress of degradation, when a people is once subdued, that even the new erected Helvetic assembly of this now humiliated country, so far from priding themselves in this last instance of patriotic virtue, unanimously decreed that the army, which, unprovoked, had slaughtered fifteen hundred of their brave countrymen, the immediate descendants of the founders of their former liberty, *had deserved well of the Helvetic nation!*⁶⁴

⁶⁴ According to the most recent intelligence, the sufferings of the Helvetic, and especially the Alpine nations, are now (Jan. 1800) arrived at a pitch that baffles all description. No sooner had Massena, in September last, driven the Austrians and Russians beyond the Rhine, than he demanded a loan of upwards of two millions of florins from the cities of Basle, Zurich, and St. Gallen, which, if not paid within two days, he declared should be raised by military execution. Although the Helvetic directory (the deluded promoters

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It will no doubt excite the indignation of men of irritable tempers, to hear republican

promoters of the revolution) loudly exclaimed against this oppressive requisition, yet the general persisted; and the French directory, to whom a pathetic appeal was made, determined in favour of the extortion. The absolute impossibility of collecting the whole amount, it was at length found necessary to admit as a sufficient plea for a moderate abatement. In less than two months (October and November, 1799) the people, who had already been exhausted by the contending armies, were compelled to supply the French invaders with upwards of 4000 oxen, 20,000 quintals of corn, 150,000 quintals of hay, 100,000 rations of bread, 25,000 quarts of wine, and many other articles, which being the principal part of their winter stores, they could not forego without a certain prospect of a famine. This wretched people had moreover to provide for the hospitals, to perform all the transport service, and to gratify the rapacity of many subordinate agents: and their murmurs were hushed by the taunting pretence that this was but a due return for the *liberty and independence* the Republican armies had conferred on them.

These calamities, however disastrous, bear yet but a small proportion to the misery experienced by the innocent people of the forest cantons and the upper Valais, who, though never in affluence, lived yet peacefully and happily among their rocks, lakes, and torrents; and asked for nothing but to be left in the tranquil enjoyment of their contented mediocrity. The few cattle that were spared by the hostile armies, they were obliged to kill for want of forage. The flourishing town of Stanz was wholly demolished: at Altorf, which took fire by accident, only one house was left standing; and the whole country is now a scene of desolation and wretchedness. The bulk of the nation, true to the oath
taken

philanthropists coolly advance that evils like CHAP.
K.
these, afflicting as they are, are yet the necessary consequences of a reform of government, and will in the end prove beneficial to the posterity of the victims who now suffer from them.⁶⁵ This indeed is transcendent virtue,

taken by their ancestors at Rutli, have been exterminated in the various encounters, in which they displayed their wonted courage, but were repeatedly deserted by their powerful allies, and overwhelmed by numbers. The few wretched survivors have lately been seen, scattered like chaff before the wind, along the frontiers of the country, without any guide but terror and dismay, and without any sustenance but the scanty supply afforded them by the compassionate, who are themselves nearly deprived of their all: aged fathers, with their famished progeny, to whom they have no bread to give; widows (fewer in number, for most of the women perished in the conflicts) bewailing the loss of husbands, children, friends; swarms of half-naked orphans exposed on the snow, or roaming in search of their slaughtered parents. This picture is not exaggerated, for it is chiefly gathered from reports published under the sanction of the French government, and by the ignominious Helvetic directory. (Leyd. Gaz. Oct. 29, Nov. 12, Dec. 3 and 24, 1799; and Jan. 3 and 7, 1800.) After such atrocious crimes, and such unmerited sufferings, can there be a doubt of a future retribution?

⁶⁵ A grave author, whom we have in general wished to follow in the present narrative, observes with frigid apathy, that 'the Swiss, amid their sufferings, forgot that great revolutions are always sacrifices which the present generation makes for the felicity of future ones.' Posselt. *Europ. Anal.* anno 1798. No. VI. p. 213.

and

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and men possessed of it must not be contradicted; the sublimity of their sentiment, being an argument they will never relinquish. Those of more moderate perfection, however, but whose plans are more likely to be truly beneficial, will probably maintain, that the most effectual mode of providing for the prosperity of future generations, is for good and wise men to co-operate in promoting the tranquillity and happiness of the present. The Swiss, moreover, might well resist all innovation, since they felt, and the bulk of the nation gratefully acknowledged, that with all the imperfections in their governments, they were still the freest and happiest people upon earth; and were fully persuaded that no revolutionary emendations, much less a total overthrow of their former polity, could in any respect improve the condition of their progeny, for whose real advantage they have more than once shewn how ready they were to shed their blood.

The Grisons
were at-
tacked.

The Grisons remained still unsubdued. These hardiest of the Alpine tribes had been abundantly practised upon by agitators, who at one time had actually succeeded to displace the legal magistrates, and to introduce a national convention, one of whose first steps was, on frivolous pretences, to seize the property of individuals, and compel several of them to quit the country.

country. This, however, was not of long duration: the anti-revolutionary party, when the dismemberment of the Valteline was decreed by Bonaparte, recovered its ascendancy, restored the former magistracy, and even compelled Florent Guyot, the French resident, and a number of his subordinate agents, to evacuate the country. Schawenburg exclaimed loudly at the atrocity of this proceeding; marched a force towards the frontiers, and menaced to spread devastation among these bare rocks and scanty vales. The people assembled in arms, and repelled his first attempts; but their government, awed by the example of the wretched Underwalders, and by no means confident of unanimity among themselves, had recourse to a measure which, a few months before, would have filled the nation with horror. They called in an Austrian army! The calamities that have since afflicted this devoted country are now become foreign to the confederacy, and hence no longer form a part of the present history. The conflict has since been between foreign powers; and their pleasure will probably decide the fate of a people which, as a state, never yet acknowledged a superior, except the Sovereign Lord of all.

Thus ended this confederacy, the victim of a Conclusion.
perfidious enemy, of an ill-timed moderation,

of

CHAP. of the aspiring views of some of its ambitious
X.
sons, and above all, of the want of unanimity among its rulers. It is possible, and the hope must not be altogether relinquished, that the nation will still recover its independence; but the ancient confederacy, it may be apprehended, has now vanished for ever. The new free constitution (for Switzerland must have a free constitution, unless the people is to degenerate into a horde of lawless ruffians) will, most probably, have a different form from that which has now been abolished. May it be productive of as many blessings!

APPENDIX.

[The following treatise, referred to in the above history, (vol. i. p. 65, and ii. p. 35) having hitherto appeared only in the Philosophical Transactions, a publication which is not in the hands of many, the editor, having previously obtained the permission of the president and council of the Royal Society, has here reprinted it, not doubting that the perusal of it will gratify many readers of this work, not only as it relates to the history they have been contemplating, but also as it points out the first step of the transition from the ancient to the modern languages.]

An Account of the Romansh Language. By Joseph Planta, Esq. F. R. S. In a Letter to Sir John Pringle, Bart. P. R. S.

British Museum,
June 10, 1775.

SIR,

THE Bible lately presented to the Royal Society by Count de Salis, being a version into a language as little attended to in this country, as it may appear curious to those who take pleasure in philological inquiries; I embrace this opportunity to communicate to you, and, with your approbation, to the Society, all that I have been able to collect concerning its history and present state.

This language is called *Romansh*, and is now spoken

spoken in the most mountainous parts of the country of the Grisons, near the sources of the Rhine and the Inn. It consists of two main dialects; which, though partaking both of the above general name, differ however so widely as to constitute in a manner two distinct languages. Books are printed in both of them; and each, though it be universally understood in its respective district, is yet sub-divided into almost as many secondary dialects as there are villages in which it is spoken; which differ, however, but little except in the pronunciation. One of the main dialects, which is spoken in the Engadine, a valley extending from the source of the Inn to the frontiers of the Tyrolese, is by the inhabitants called *Ladin*. It admits of some variation, even in the books, according as they are printed either in the upper or the lower part of this province. The abovementioned Bible is in the dialect of the lower Engadine; which, however, is perfectly understood in the upper part of that province, where they use no other version. The other dialect, which is the language of the Grey, or Upper League, is distinguished from the former by the name of *Cialorer*;* and I must here observe, that in the very centre, and most inaccessible parts of this latter district, there are some villages situated in the narrow valleys, called *Rheinwald*, *Cepina*,† &c. in which a third language is spoken, more similar to the German than to either of the above idioms, although they be

* This is rather a trivial name; but the dialect has no other distinctive appellation.

† Tschudi, *Rhet. Descrip.* p. 43. *MERIN Topogr. Helv.* p. 64.

neither

neither contiguous, nor have any great intercourse with the parts where the German is used.

It being impossible to form any idea of the origin and progress of a language, without attending to the revolutions that may have contributed to its formation and subsequent variations; and this being particularly the case in the present instance, wherein no series of documents is extant to guide us in our researches; I shall briefly recapitulate the principal events which may have affected the language of the Grisons, as I find them related by authors of approved veracity.*

Ambigatus, the first king of the Celtic Gaul upon record, whot about 400† years before Christ, governed all the country situated between the Alps and the Pyrenæan mountains, sent out two formidable armies under the command of one of his nephews; one of whom, named Segovisius, forced his way into the heart of Germany; and the other, Bellovisius, having passed the Alps, penetrated into Italy as far as the settlements of the Tuscans, which at that time extended over the greatest part of the country now called Lombardy. These, and several other swarms of invaders whom the successes of the former

* Sprecher, Simler, Tschudi, Scheuchzer. Campell's Chronicle is looked upon as the most authentic and circumstantial; but there being only a few manuscript copies of it extant in the hands of private persons in the Grisons, I have not been able to avail myself of his researches. Guller and Stumpfius might also have furnished some material information; but neither of them have I had an opportunity of inspecting.

† Liv. lib. v. c. 34.

‡ Other authors place the reign of this king 180 years earlier.

SOON

soon after attracted, having totally subdued that country, built Milan, Verona, Brescia, and several other considerable towns, and governed with such tyrannic sway, especially over the nobility, whose riches they coveted and sought by every means to extort from them, that most of the principal families, joining under the conduct of Rhætus,* one of the most distinguished personages among them, retired with the best part of their effects and attendants among the steepest mountains of the Alps, near the sources of the Rhine, into the district which is now called the Grey League.

The motive of their flight, their civil deportment, and perhaps more so, the wealth they brought with them, procured them a favourable reception from the original inhabitants of that inhospitable region, who are mentioned by authorst as being a Celtic nation, fabulously conjectured from their name *Λαιπυργια*† to have been left there by Hercules in his expedition into Spain.

The new adventurers had no sooner climbed over the highest precipices, but thinking themselves secure from the pursuits of their rapacious enemies, they fixed in a valley which, from its great fertility in comparison of the country they had just passed, they called *Domestica*.§ They intermixed with the old inhabitants, and built some towns and many castles, whose present names manifestly bespeak their

* Plin. lib. iii. c. 5. Justin. lib. xx. c. 5.

† Cluver. Ital. Antiq. lib. i. c. 14.

‡ A spurious derivation from the verb *λαίπω*.

§ Probably by them pronounced *Tomiliasca*, the name it now bears.

brigin.* They soon after spread all over the country, which took the name of Rhætia from that of their leader; and introduced a form of government similar to their own, of which there are evident traces at this day, especially in the administration of justice; in which a *Laertes* or president, now called landamman or minstral, together with twelve *Lucumones*† or jurors, determine all causes, both civil and criminal:‡ and Livy,§ although he erroneously pretends that they retained none of their ancient customs, yet allows that they continued the use of their language, though somewhat adulterated by a mixture with that of the Aborigines.

I must here interrupt the thread of this narration by observing, that the only way to account for the present use of a different language in the centre and most craggy parts of the Grey League, is by allowing that the Tuscans, who, from the delicacy of their constitutions and habits, were little able, and less inclined, to encounter the hardships of so severe a climate and so barren a soil, never attempted to mix with the original and more sturdy inhabitants of that unfavoured spot; but left them and their language,

* *Tusis* (Tuscia) and in Italian *Tosana*, the principal place; *Rhealta* (Rhetia alta); *Rheambs* (Rhetia ampla); *Rhazunz* (Rhetia ima); and above twelve other castles, the remains of which are now to be seen in the valley *Tomiliasca*.

† In some communities there are fourteen jurors besides the Landamman.

‡ Serv. in *Æneid*. lib. viii. 65. lib. x. 202. Sprech. Pall. Rhæt. p. 9. Siml. Rep. Helv. p. 281. ed. 1735.

§ Liv. lib. v. c. 33.

... in the primitive
...

... I. *senex* families, dread-
... under Hannibal,
... the civil war,
... reigns, interior com-
... forsook the Latin
... for a peaceful enjoyment
... the islands where Venice
... the mountains of the Gri-
... fixed their residence in the
... not only from the testimonies
... the names of several places
... which are evidently of Roman deriva-
...

The inhabitants these emigrants found in that place
... be a mixture of the Tuscan
... *Lepanti*: and the two languages which
... must, at the very first, have
...; as the Tuscan, which derived im-
... from the Greek, is known to have had a
... in the formation of the Roman. But as
... generally observed, that the more polished people
... their native tongue wherever they go to re-
... in any considerable numbers, the arrival of these

* Speech p. 214. Mer. l. c.

† *De Cade* *hæ*, perhaps the vulgar Roman phrase expressing
de capite domi. There are other etymologies, but all equally
uncertain.

‡ Speech p. 10.

§ *Lavin* (*Lavinium*), *Sus* (*Susa*), *Zernett* (*Cerneto*), *Ardet*
(*Ardea*) &c.

successive

successive colonies must gradually have produced a considerable change in the language of the country in which they settled ; * and this change gave rise to the dialect since called Ladin, probably from the name of the mother country of its principal authors. †

Although the name of *Romansh*, which the whole language bears, seems to be a badge of Roman servitude, yet the conquest of that nation, if ever effected, could not have produced a great alteration in a language which must already have been so similar to their own ; and its general name may as well be attributed to the pacific as to the hostile Romans. But when we consider that a coalition of the two main dialects, which differ so far as not to be reciprocally understood, must have been the inevitable consequence of a total reduction ; and that such a coalition is known never to have taken place, we may lay the greater stress upon the many passages of ancient authors, ‡ in which it is implied that the boasted vic-

* Spreh. p. 10.

† A parallel instance of the formation of a language by Roman colonies is the idiom of Moldavia ; which, according to Prince Cantemer's account of that country, has still many traces of its Latin origin, and which, though engrafted upon the Dacian, and since upon the Sclavonian dialects of the Celtic, may still be considered as a sister language to that I am here treating of.

‡ Videre Rhæti bella sub Alpibus

Drusum gerentem et Vindelici.

HOR. lib. 4. Od. iv.

———— immanesque Rhætōs

Auspiciis repulit secundis.

Ibid. Od. xiv.

Fundat ab extremo flavos aquilone Suevos

Albis, et indomitum Rhēni Caput.

LUC. lib. ii. 52.

———— Rhenumque minacem

Cornibus infractis.

CLAUD. Laud. Stilich. lib. i. 220.

E E 2

tories

tories of the Romans over the Rhæti, for which public honours had been decreed to L. Munatus, M. Anthony, Drusus, and Augustus, amounted to no more than frequent repulses of those hardy people into their mountains; out of which their want of sufficient room and sustenance, (which in our days drives considerable numbers into the services of foreign powers) compelled them at times to make desperate excursions in quest of necessaries. And we may also from these collected authorities be induced to give the greater credit to the commentator of Lucan,* and to the modern historians,† who positively assert, that the people living near the sources of the Rhine and the Inn were never totally subdued by the Roman arms; but only repelled in their attempts to harass their neighbours.

This whole country, however, from its central situation, could not but be annumerated to one of the provinces of the empire; and accordingly we find that Rhætia itself (which by the accounts of ancient geographers‡ appears to have extended its limits beyond the lake of Constance, Augsburg, and Trent, towards Germany, and to Como and Verona towards Italy) was formed into a Roman province, governed by a pro-consul or procurator, who resided at Augsburg; and that when in the year 119, the Emperor Adrian divided it into Rhætia *prima* and *secunda*, the governor of the former, in which the country I am now speaking of must have been comprized, took up

* Horten. in Lucan, p. 163. edit. 1578. fol.

† Sprech. p. 18. &c.

‡ Strabo, lib. IV. sub. fin. Cluver. Ital. vet. lib. I. c. 16.

his residence in two castles situated where Coire now stands, whilst the other continued his seat at Augsburg. But notwithstanding these appearances, no trace or monument of Roman servitude is to be met with in this district, except the ambiguous name of one mountain,* situated on the skirts of these highlands, and generally thought to have been the *non plus ultra* of the Roman arms on the Italian side.

From the difficulty those persevering veterans experienced in keeping this stubborn people in awe, I mean to infer that such strenuous asserters of their independence, whom the flattering pens of Ovid and Horace represent as formidable even to Augustus, and preferring death to the loss of their liberties,† favoured by the natural strength and indigence of their country, were not very likely to be so far subdued by any foreign power inferior to the Roman, as to suffer any considerable revolution in their customs and language: for as to the irruptions of the Goths, Vandals, and Lombards, in the fifth and sixth centuries, besides a profound silence in history concerning any successful attempt of those barbarians upon this spot, it is scarce credible, that any of them should have either wished or endeavoured to settle in a country, perhaps far less hospitable than that which they had just forsaken, especially after they had opened to themselves a way into the fertile plains of Lombardy.

Some stress must be laid upon this inference, as

* *Julius Mons*, Scheuchzer *Iter. Alp.* p. 114.

† *Rhetica nunc præbent Thraciæque arma metum.*

OVID. *Trist. lib. ii.* 226.

Devota morti pectora liberæ,

HOR. 4. *lib. Od. xiv.*

the

the history of what befel this country after the decline of the Roman empire is so intimately blended with that of Suabia, the Tyrolese, and the lower parts of the Grisons, which are known to have fallen to the share of the rising power of the Franks, that nothing positive can be drawn from authors as to the interior state of this small tract. The victory gained in the year 496 near Cologne, by Clovis I. king of the Franks, over the Alemanni, who had wrested from the Romans all the dominions on the northern side of the Alps; and the defeat of both Romans and Goths in Italy, in the year 549, by the treacherous arms of Theodebert king of Austrasia, whose dominions soon after devolved to the crown of France, necessarily gave the aspiring Merovingian race a great ascendancy over all the countries surrounding the Grisons; and accordingly we find, that this district also was soon after, without any military effort, considered as part of the dominions of the reviving western empire. But it does not appear that those monarchs ever made any other use of their supremacy in these parts than, agreeably to the feudal system which they introduced, to constitute dukes, earls, presidents, and bailiffs, over Rætia; to grant out tenures upon the usual feudal terms; and consequently to levy forces in most of their military expeditions.

It must, however, be observed, that these feudal substitutes were seldom, if ever, strangers: those who are upon record to the latter end of the eighth century, having all been chosen from among the nobility of the country.* And that no foreign garri-

* Sprengel, p. 52—55.

sons were ever maintained for any continuance of time in these parts, appears from a circumstance related by their annalists;* who say, that an inroad of the Huns in 670, when external forces would probably have been very acceptable to the natives, was repulsed merely by a concourse of the inhabitants.

History continues to furnish us with proofs of the little connexion this people had with other nations in their domestic affairs, notwithstanding their dependance upon a foreign power. In the year 780, the Bishop of Coire, who by the constitution of that see can only be a native,† obtained from Charlemain, besides many considerable honours and privileges in the empire, a grant of the supreme authority in this country, by the investiture of the office of hereditary president or bailiff over all Rhætia. His successors not only enjoyed this prerogative to the extinction of the Carolingian race of emperors in 911; but received accumulated favours from other succeeding monarchs, as the bigoted devotion of those times or motives of interest prompted them. And so far did their munificence gradually extend, that the sole property of one of the three leagues ‡ was at one time vested in the hands of the bishop.

This prelate and the nobles, the greatest part of whom became his retainers, availed themselves, like

* Spreng. p. 58.

† This privilege has at times been waved; but never without some plausible pretence, and a formal rescript acknowledging the exclusive right.

‡ The League *Cadéa*, or of the *House of God*, so called from the cathedral of the bishopric of Coire, which is situated in its capital.

all

all the German princes, of the confusion, divisions, and interreigns which frequently distracted the empire in the succeeding centuries, in order to establish a firm and unlimited authority of their own. Henceforth the annals of this country furnish us with little more than catalogues of the bishops and dukes, who were still, at times, nominated by the emperors; and of the domains granted out by them to different indigent families; with accounts of the atrocious cruelties exercised by these lords over their vassals; and with anecdotes of the prowess of the natives in several expeditions into Italy and Palestine, in which they still voluntarily accompanied the emperors.

The repeated acts of tyranny exercised by those arbitrary despots, who had now shaken off all manner of restraint, at length exasperated the people into a general revolt, and brought on the confederacy; in which the bishop and most of the nobles were glad to join, in order to screen themselves from the fury of the insurgents.

The first step towards this happy revolution was made by some *venerable old men dressed in the coarse grey cloth* of the country, who in the year 1424 met privately in a wood near a place called Truns, in the Upper League; where, *impressed with a sense of their former liberties,** they determined to remonstrate against, and oppose, the violent proceedings of their oppressors. The abbot Dissentis was the first who countenanced their measures; their joint influence gradually prevailed over several of the most moderate

* *Canitie griseoque amictu venerandi.*—*Memores adhuc antiquæ libertatis.* Sprech. p. 189.

among the nobles; and hence arose the league which, from the colour of its first promoters, was ever called the Grey League; which, from its being the first in the bold attempt to shake off the yoke of wanton tyranny, has ever since retained the pre-eminence in rank before the two other leagues; and which has even given its name to the whole country, whose inhabitants, from the circumstances of their deliverance, pride themselves in the appellation of *Grisones*, or the *grey-ones*.* From this period nothing has ever affected their freedom and absolute independence, which they now enjoy in the most unlimited sense, in spite of the repeated efforts of the house of Austria to recover some degree of ascendancy over them.

From this concise view of the history of the *Grisons*, in which I have carefully guarded against favouring any particular hypothesis, it appears, that as no foreign nation ever gained any permanent footing in the most mountainous parts of this country since the establishment of the Tuscans and Romans, the language now spoken could never have suffered any considerable alterations from extraneous mixtures of modern languages. And to those who may object, that languages like all other human institutions will, though left to themselves, be inevitably affected by the common revolutions of time, I shall observe, that a language, in which no books are written, but which is only spoken by a people chiefly devoted to arms

* The following barbarous distich is sometimes inscribed on the arms of the three leagues.

Fœdera sunt cana, cana fides, cana libertas:

Hæc tria sub uno continentur corpore Rhæto.

and

and agriculture, and consequently not cultivated by the criticisms of men of taste and learning, is by no means exposed to the vicissitudes of those that are polished by refined nations ;* and that, however paradoxical it may appear, it is nevertheless true, that the degeneracy of a language is more frequently to be attributed to an extravagant refinement than to the neglect of an illiterate people, unless indeed external causes interfere. May we not hence conclude, that as the Romansh has never been used in any regular composition in writing till the sixteenth century, nor affected by any foreign invasion or intimate connexion, it is not likely to have received any material change before the period of its being written ? And we have the authority of the books since printed to prove, that it is at present the identical language that was spoken two hundred years ago. These arguments will receive additional weight from the proofs I shall hereafter give of the great affinity there is between the language as it is now spoken, and the Romance that was used in France nine centuries ago.

When we further consider the facts I have above briefly related, the wonder will cease, that in a cluster of mountains, situated in the centre of Europe, a distinct language (not a dialect or jargon of those spoken by the contiguous nations, as has been generally imagined) should have maintained itself through a series of ages, in spite of the many revolutions which frequently changed the whole face of the adjacent countries. And indeed, so obstinately tenacious are

* See Dr. Percy's preface to his translation of Mallet's Northern Antiquities, p. xxii. where this question is more amply discussed.

these

these people of their independency, laws, customs, and consequently of their very language, that, as has been already observed, their form of government, especially in judicial matters, still bears evident marks of the ancient Tuscan constitution; and that, although they be frequently exposed to inconveniences from their stubbornness in this respect, they have not yet been prevailed upon to adopt the Gregorian reformation of the calendar.

As to the nature of this language, it may now be advanced, with some degree of confidence, that the *Cialover* owes it origin to a mixture of the Tuscan and of the dialect of the Celtic spoken by the Lepontii; and that the introduction of the vulgar Roman affected it in some degree, but particularly gave rise to the *Ladin*; the vocabulary of which, as any one may be convinced by inspecting a few lines of the bible, has a great affinity with that of the Latin tongue. But these assertions rest merely upon historical evidence; for as to the *Cialover*, all that it may have retained of the Tuscan or Roman, is so much disfigured by an uncouth pronunciation and a vague orthography, that all etymological inquiries are thereby rendered intricate and unsatisfactory. And as to the *Ladin*, although its derivation be more manifest, yet we are equally at a loss from what period or branch of the Latin tongue to trace its real origin; for I have found, after many tedious experiments, that even the vocabulary, in which the resemblance is most evident, differs equally from the classical purity of Tully, Cæsar, and Sallust, as it does from the primitive Latin of the twelve tables, of Ennius, and the *columna rostralis*

rostralis of Duillius, which has generally been thought the parent of the Gallic Romance; as also from the trivial language of Varro, Vegetius, and Columella. May we not from this circumstance infer, that, as is the case in all vernacular tongues, the vulgar dialect of the Romans, the *sermo usualis, rusticus, pedestris*,* of which there are no monuments extant, differed very widely both in pronunciation and construction from that which has at any time been used either in writing or in the senate?

The grammatical variations, the syntax, and the genius of the language, must in this, as well as in several other modern European tongues, have been derived from the Celtic; it being well known, that the frequent use of articles, the distinction of cases by prepositions, the application of two auxiliaries in the conjugations, do by no means agree with the Latin turn of expression; although a late French academician,† who has taken great pains to prove that the Gallic Romance was solely derived from the Roman, quotes several instances in which even the most classical writers have in this respect offended the purity of that refined language. It cannot here be denied, that as new ideas always require new signs to express them, some foreign words, and perhaps phrases, must necessarily, from time to time, have insinuated themselves into the Romansh, by the military and some commercial intercourse of the Grisons with other nations; and this accounts for several modern Ger-

* Conf. Mem. des Inscript. tom. xxiv. p. 608.

† Bonamy, v. Mem. des Inscript. l. c.

man words which are now incorporated into the language of the Engadine.*

The little connexion there is in mountainous countries between the inhabitants of the different valleys, and the absolute independence of each jurisdiction in this district, which still lessens the frequency of their intercourse, also accounts, in a great measure, for the variety of secondary dialects subsisting in almost every different community or even village.

The oldest specimens of writing in this language are some dramatical performances in verse upon scriptural subjects, which are extant only in manuscript. The Histories of Susanna, of the Prodigal Son, of Judith and Holofernes, and of Esther, are among the first; and are said to have been composed about the year 1560. The books that have since been printed are chiefly upon religious subjects; and among those that are not so, the only I have ever heard of are a small code of the laws of the country in the Ciallover dialect, and an epitome of Sprecher's Chronicle; by Da Porta, in the Ladin.

The language spoken in Gaul from the fifth to the twelfth centuries being evidently a mixture of the same Roman and Celtic ingredients, and partaking of the same name with those of the Grisons; it will, I hope, not be thought foreign to the subject of this

* *Tupferdà*, Trapferkeit, Bravery; *Nardà*, Narheit, Folly; *Klinot*, Kleinod, a Jewel; *Graf*, Graf, a Count; *Baur*, Baur, a Peasant, &c.

letter,

letter, if I enter into a few particulars concerning it, as it seems to have been an essential part, or rather the trunk, of the language, the history of which I am endeavouring to elucidate.

One of the many instances how little the laboured researches of philologists into the origin of languages are to be depended upon, is the variety of opinions entertained by French authors concerning the formation of the Gallic Romance. A learned Benedictine* first starts the conjecture, and then maintains it against the attacks of an anonymous writer, that the vulgar Latin became the universal language of Gaul immediately after Caesar's conquest, and that its corruption, with very little mixture of the original language of the country, gradually produced the Romance towards the eighth century. Bonamy,† on the other hand, is of opinion, that soon after that conquest, a corruption of vulgar Latin by the Celtic formed the Romance, which he takes to be the language always meant by authors when they speak of the *Lingua Romana* used in Gaul. The author of the Celtic Dictionary ‡ tells us, that the Romance is derived from the *Latin*, the *Celtic*, which he more frequently calls Gallic, and the *Teutonic*; in admitting of which latter he deviates from most other authors,§ who deny that the Teutonic had any share in the composition of the Romance, since the Franks found it already established when they entered Gaul,

* Rivet, Hist. Litt. de la France, tom. vii. p. 1. et seq.

† Mem. des Inscript. tom. xxiv. p. 594.

‡ Bullet, Mem. de la Langue Celtique, tom. i. p. 23.

§ Mem. des Inscript. tom. xxiv. p. 603.

and

and were long before they could prevail upon their new subjects to adopt any part of their own mother tongue, which however appears to have been afterwards instrumental in the formation of the modern French. Duclos,* guided, I imagine, by du Cange,† whose opinion appears to be the most sober and best authenticated, maintains that the vulgar Latin was undoubtedly the foundation of the Romance; but that much of the Celtic gradually insinuated itself in spite of the policy of the Romans, who never failed to use all their endeavours in order to establish their language wherever they spread their arms.

Among this variety of conjectures and acute controversies, I find it however agreed on all hands, that the vocabulary of the Roman, and the idiom of the Celtic, have chiefly contributed to the formation of the Gallic, Romance, which is sufficient to prove that it partakes of a common origin with that of the Grisons.

There are incontestable proofs that this language was once universal all over France; and that this, and not immediately the Latin, has been the parent of the Provençal, and afterwards of the modern French, the Italian, and the Spanish. The oath taken by Lewis the Germanic, in the year 842, in confirmation of an alliance between him and Charles the Bald his brother, is a decisive proof of the general use of the Romance by the whole French nation at that time, and of their little knowledge of the Teutonic, which being the native tongue of Lewis, would

* Mem. des. Inscript. tom. xv. p. 575. et seq.

† Præf. Gloss. n. xiii.

certainly

certainly have been used by him, in this oath, had it been understood by the French to whom he addressed himself. But Nithardus,* a contemporary writer and near relation to the contracting parties, informs us, that Lewis took the oath in the Romance language, in order that it might be understood by the French nobility who were the subjects of Charles; and that they, in their turn, entered into reciprocal engagements in *their own language*, which the same author again declares to have been the Romance, and not the Teutonic; although one would imagine that, had they at all understood this latter tongue, they could not but have used it upon this occasion, in return for the condescension of Lewis.

As a comparison between this language and the Romansh of the Grisons cannot be considered as a mere object of curiosity, but may also serve to corroborate the proofs I have above alleged of the antiquity of the latter, I have annexed in the appendix,† a translation of this oath into the language of Engadine, which approaches nearest to it; although I must observe, that there are in the other dialect some words which have a still greater affinity with the language of the oath, as appears by another translation I have procured, in which both dialects are indifferently used. To prevent any doubts concerning the veracity of these translations, I must here declare, that I am indebted for them, and for several anecdotes concerning that language, to a man of letters, who is a native and has long been an inhabitant of the Gri-

* Du Chesne, Hist. Franc. tom. ii. p. 374.

† No. I.

sons,

sons, and is lately come to reside in London. I have added to this comparative view of those two languages, the Latin words from which both seem to have been derived ; and, as a proof of the existence of the Gallic Romance in France down to the twelfth century, I have also subjoined the words used in that kingdom at that period, as they are given us by the author of the article (*Langue*) *Romane*, in the French Encyclopedie.

To the comparison of the two Romances, and the similarity of their origin, I may now with confidence add the authority of Fontanini* to prove, that they are one and the same language. This author, speaking of the ancient Gallic Romance, asserts that it is now spoken in the country of the Grisons ; though, not attending to the variety of dialects, some of which have certainly nothing of the Italian, he supposes it to have been altogether adulterated by a mixture of that modern tongue.

Whilst the Grisons neglected to improve their language, and rejected, or indeed were out of the reach of every refinement it might have derived from polished strangers, the taste and fertile genius of the Troubadours, fostered by the countenance and elegance of the brilliant courts and splendid nobility of Provence, did not long leave theirs in the rough state in which we find it in the ninth century. But the change having been gradual and almost imperceptible, the French historians have fixed no epocha for the transition of the Romance into the Provençal. That the former language had not received any con-

* Eloq Ital. p. 44.

siderable alteration in the twelfth century may be gathered from the comparison in the appendix : and that it still bore the same name, appears from the titles of several books which are said to have been written in, or translated into, the Romance. But though mention is made of that name even after this æra, yet upon examining impartially what is given us for that language in this period, it will be found so different from the Romance of the ninth century, that to trace it any further would be both a vain and an extravagant pursuit.

Admitting, however, the universal use of the Romance all over France down to the twelfth century, which no French author has yet doubted or denied; and allowing that what the writers of those times say of the Gallic is to be understood of the Romance, as appears from chronological proofs, and the expressions of several authors prior to the fifth century;* who, by distinguishing the *Gallic* both from the *Latin* and the *Celtic*, plainly indicate that they thereby mean the Romance, those being the only three languages which, before the invasion of the Franks, could possibly have been spoken, or even understood in Gaul : admitting these premises, I say, it necessarily follows, that the language introduced into England under Alfred, and afterwards more universally established by Edward the Confessor, and William the Conqueror, must have been an emanation of the

* Fidei commissa quocunque Sermone relinqui possunt, non solum *Latino* vel Græco, sed etiam *Punico* vel *Gallicano*. Digest. l. xxii. tit. 1. § 11.

Tu autem vel *Celtice*, vel si mavis *Gallice*, loquere. Sulp. Sev. Dial. i. § 6. sub sin.

Romance, very near akin to that of the abovementioned oath, and consequently to that which is now spoken in the Alps.

The intercourse between Britain and Gaul is known to have been of a very early date ; for even in the first century we find, that the British lawyers derived the greatest part of their knowledge from those of the continent ;* while on the other hand, the Gallic Druids are known to have resorted to Britain for instruction in their mysterious rites. The Britons, therefore, could not be totally ignorant of the Gallic language. And hence it will appear, that Grimbald, John, and the other doctors introduced by Alfred,† could find no great difficulty in propagating their native tongue in this island ; which tongue, at that interval of time, could only be the true Romance, since they were contemporaries with Lewis the Germanic.

That the Romance was almost universally understood in this kingdom under Edward the Confessor, it being not only used at court, but frequently at the bar, and even sometimes in the pulpit, is a fact too well known and attested ‡ to need my further authenticating it with superfluous arguments and testimonies.

Duclos, in his History of the Gallic Romance,§ gives the abovementioned oath of Lewis as the first monument of that language. The second he men-

* Gallia Causidicos docuit facunda Britannos. Juv. Sat. xv. 111.

† William of Malmsb. l. ii. c. 4.

‡ Ingulph. passim. Du Chesne, tom. iii.

§ Mem. des Inscrip. tom. xvii. p. 179.

tions is the code of laws of William the Conqueror,* whom the least proficient in the English history knows to have rendered his language almost universal in this kingdom. How little progress it had yet made towards the modern French; and how great an affinity it still bore with the present Romansh of the Grisons, will appear from the annexed translation of the first paragraph of these laws into the latter tongue.†

If we may credit Du Cange,‡ who grounds his assertion upon various instruments of the kings of Scotland during the twelfth century, the Romance had also penetrated into that kingdom before that period.

The same corruption, or coalescence, which gave rise to the Gallic Romance, and to that of the Grisons, must also have produced in Italy a language, if not perfectly similar, at least greatly approaching to those two idioms. Nor did it want its northern nations to contribute what the two other branches derived from that source.§ But be the origin what it will, certain it is, that a jargon very different from either the Latin or the Italian was spoken in Italy from the time of the irruptions of the barbarians to the successful labours of Dante and Petrarca; that this jargon was usually called the *vulgar idiom*; but that Speroni,|| the father of an Italian literature, and

* Wilkins, *Leges Anglo-Sax.*

† *Append. No. II.*

‡ *Præf. Gloss. n. xxi.*

§ Fontanini, p. 4.

|| Speron. *Dial. passim.*—*Conf. Menage, Orig. della Ling. Ital. voce Romanza.*

others,

others, frequently call it the *common Italian Romance*. And if Fontanini's* authorities be sufficient, it appears that even the Gallic Romance, by the residence of the papal court at Avignon, and from other causes, made its way into Italy before it was polished into the Provençal.

As to Naples and Sicily, the expulsion of the Saracens by the Normans, under Robert Guiscard in 1059, must have produced in that country nearly the same effect, a similar event soon after brought about in England. And in fact we have the authority of William of Apulia† to prove, that the conquerors used all their efforts to propagate their language and manners among the natives, that they might ever after be considered only as one people. And Hugo Falcland‡ relates, that in the year 1150, Count Henry refused to take upon him the management of public affairs, under pretence of not knowing the language of the French; which, he adds, was absolutely necessary at court.

That the language of the Romans penetrated very early into Spain, appears most evidently from a passage in Strabo,§ who asserts that the Turditani inhabiting the banks of the Boetis, now the Guadalquivir, forgot their original tongue, and adopted that of the conquerors. That the Romance was used there in the fourteenth century appears from a correspondence between St. Vincent of Ferrieres and Don Martin, son of Peter the

* Font. p. 17.

† Murat. Scrip. Ital. tom. v. p. 255.

‡ Ibid. tom. vii. p. 322.

§ Lib. iii.

IVth of Arragon;* and that this language must once have been common in that kingdom appears manifestly from the present name of the Spanish, which is still usually called Romance.† These circumstances considered, I am not so much inclined to discredit a fact related by Mabillon,‡ who says, that in the eighth century a paralytic Spaniard, on paying his devotions at the tomb of a saint in the church of Fulda, conversed with a monk of that abbey, who, *because he was an Italian*, understood the language of the Spaniard. Neither does an oral tradition I heard some times ago appear so absurd to me, as it did when it was first related to me, which says, that two Catalonians travelling over the Alps, were not a little surprized when they came into the Grison country, to find that their native tongue was understood by the inhabitants, and that they could comprehend most of the language of that district.

This universality of the Romance in the French dominions during the eleventh century, also accounts for its introduction in Palestine and many other parts of the Levant by Godfrey de Bouillon, and the multitude of adventurers who engaged under him in the Crusade. The assizes of Jerusalem, and those of Cyprus, are standing monuments of the footing that language had obtained in those parts; and if we may trust a Spanish historian of some reputation§ who resided in Greece in the thirteenth century, the Athe-

* Mabil. an. l. 64, n. 124.

† Orozco, Tes. Castill. voce Romance—Conf. Crescimbeni Volg. Poes. l. v. c. 1.

‡ Act. Ben. Sæc. 3. p. 2. p. 258.

§ Rayn. Montapéro Chronica de Juan I.

nians

ians and the inhabitants of Morea spoke at that time the same language that was used in France. And there is great reason to imagine, that the affinity the *Lingua Franca* bears to the French and Italian is intirely to be derived from the Romance, which was once commonly used in the ports of the Levant. The heroic atchievements and gallantry of the knights of the cross also gave rise to the swarm of fabulous narratives; which, though not an invention of those days, were yet, from the name of the language in which they were written, ever after distinguished by the appellation of *Romances*.*

I shall now conclude this letter by observing, that far from presuming that the Romance has been preserved so near its primitive state only in the country of the Grisons, there is great reason to suppose that it still exists in several other remote and unfrequented parts. When Fontanini informs us† that the ancient Romance is now spoken in the country of the Grisons, he adds, that it is also the common dialect of the Friulense, and of some districts in Savoy bordering upon Dauphiné. And Rivet‡ seriously undertakes to prove, that the Patois of several parts of the Limousin, Quercy, and Auvergne (which in fact agrees singularly with the *Romansh* of the Grisons) is the very Romance of eight centuries ago. Neither do I doubt, but what some inquisitive traveller might still meet with manifest traces of it in many parts of the Pyreneans and other mountainous regions of Spain, where the Moors and other invaders have never penetrated.

I have the honour to be, &c.

* Huet, Orig. des Rom. p. 126. ed. 1678.

† P. 43. 44.

‡ Hist. Litt. de la Fr. tom. vii. p. 22.

No. I. Oath of Lewis the Germanic.

1. Latin from which the Romances are derived. 2. Gallic Romance in which the oath was taken. 3. French of the twelfth century. 4. Romansh of Engadine, called Ladin. 5. Romansh of both dialects.

1. Pro Dei amore, et pro Christiano populo, et nostra
2. *Pro Deu amur, et pro Christian poblo, et nostr*
3. Por Deu amor, et por Christian people, et nostre
4. *Per amur da Dieu, et per il Christian poevel, et noss*
5. Pro l'amur da Deus, et pro il Christian pobel, et nost

1. communi salvamento, de ista die in abante, in quan-
2. *commun salvament, d'ist di en avant, in quant*
3. commun salvament, de ste di en avant, en quant
4. *commun salvament, da quist di in avant, in quant*
5. commun salvament, d'ist di en avant, in quant

1. tum Deus sapere et posse mihi donat, sic salvabo ego
2. *Deus savir et podir me dunat, si salvarai io*
3. Deu saveir et poir me donne, si salvarai je
4. *Dieu savair et podair m'duna, shi salvaro ei*
5. Deus savir et podir m'dunat, shi salvaro io

1. eccistum meum fratrem Karlum, et in adjutum ero
2. *cist meon fradre Karlo, et in adjudab er*
3. cist mon frere Karle, et en adjude serai
4. *quist mieu frer Carlo, et in adiud li saro*
5. quist meu frad'r Carl, et in adjudh saro

1. in quaque una causa, sic quomodo homo per directum
2. *in cadhuna cosa, si cum om per dreit*
3. en cascade cose, si cum om per dreict
4. *in chiaduna chiossa, shi scho l'hom per drett*
5. in caduna cosa, si com om per drett

1. suum

1. suum fratrem salvare debet, in hoc quod ille mihi
2. son fardre salvar dist, in o quid il me
3. son frere salver dist, en o qui il me
4. siçu frær salvar d'uess, in que chél a mi
5. seu frad'r salvar dess, in que chél me

1. alterum sic faceret; et ab Lothario nullum placitum
2. altresì fazet; et ab Laudher nul plaid
3. altresì fascet; et a Lothaire nul plaid
4. altresì fadschess; et da Lothar mai non paendrò io un
5. altresì fazess; et da Lothar nul plaid mai

1. nunquam prehendam quod meo volle eccisti meo fratri
2. nunquam prindrai qui meon vol cist meon fradre
3. nonques prendrai qui par mon voil a cist mon frere
4. pläd che con mieu volair a quist mieu frær
5. non prendro che con mæu voler a quist meü frad'r

1. Karlo in damno sit,
2. Karle in domno sit.
3. Karle en dam seit.
4. Carlo sai in damn.
5. Carl in damn sia.

No. II. The first Paragraph of the Laws of William the Conqueror.

1. The Latin translation. 2. The French original. 3. A translation into the Romansh of both dialects.

1. Hæ sunt Leges et Consuetudines quas Willelmus Rex
2. Ce sont les Leis et l's Custumes que li Reis William grantut
3. Que sun las Leias e'ls Custums que il Rei Willelm ga-

1. concessit

1. concessit toto populo Angliæ post subactam terram.
 2. a tut le peuple de Engleterre après la conquest de la terre
 3. rantit a tut il poevel d'Engelterra dapo il conquist della

1. Eædem sut quas Edwardus Rex Cognatus ejus obser-
 2. Ice les meismes que la Reis Edward sun Cosin tint
 3. terra. E sun las medemas que il Rei Edward su cusrin

1. vavit ante eum. Scilicet: Pax Sanctæ Ecclesiæ,
 2. devant lui. Co est a savor: Pais a Sainte Eglise,
 3. tenet avant el. Co es da savor: Pæsh alla Santa Ba-

1. cujuscunque forisfacturæ quis reus sit hoc tempore, et
 2. de quel forfait que home out fait en cel tens, et
 3. selga,* da quel sfarfatt que om a fatt en que tem, et

1. venire potest ad sanctum Ecclesiam, pacem habeat vitæ
 2. il pout venir a sainte Eglise, out pais de vie
 3. il pout venir alla Santa Baselga, haun pæsh da vitta

1. et membri. Et si quis injecerit manum in eum qui
 2. et de membre. E-se alquons meist main en celui qui
 3. et da members. E si alcun metta man a quel que la

1. matrem Ecclesiam quæsierit, sive sit Abbatia sive
 2. la mere Eglise requireit, se cep fust u Abbeie u
 3. mamma Baselga requira, qu'ella fuss Abbatia u

1. Ecclesia religionis, reddat eum quem abstulerit et
 2. Eglise de religion, rendist ce que il japereit pris
 3. Baselga da religiun, renda que qu'el savares prais, et

1. centum solidos nomine forisfacturæ, et matri Ecclesiæ
 2. e cent sols de forfait, e de Mer Eglise de
 3. cent solds da sfarfatt, et alla mamma Baselga da

* The word *Ecclesia* being more modern in the Latin tongue than *Basilica*, the Romansh word *Baselga* derived from the latter is an additional proof of the antiquity of this language.

1. parochial

1. parochiali 20 solidos, et capellar 10 solidos : Et qui fregerit
2. *paroisse 20 solds, e de Chapelle 10 solds ; E que enfraiant*
3. parochia 20 solds, e da capella 10 solds : E que in frignand

1. pacem Regis in Merchenelega 100 solidis emendet;
2. *la pais le Rei en Merchenelae 100 solds les amendes;*
3. la pæsh del Rei in Merchenelae 100 solds d'amenda;

1. similiter de compensatione homicidii et de insidijs
2. *altresi de Heinfare e de aweit*
3. altresì della compensatiun del omicidi et insidias

1. prægogitatis,
2. *purpensed.*
4. perpensadas.

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ERRATA.

VOL. I. page 59, line 2 from the bottom, *for melora, read me lora.*

68, note 28, *after Tacit. insert l. i.*

171, last line, *for here, read there.*

404. line 17, *for Hermen, read Herman.*

VOL. II. page 35, note 14, *for Laden, read Ladin.*

VOL. III. page 293, line 1 of the marginal note, *for Fresh, read First.*

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